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Piano Series

A STANDARDIZED TEXT-WORK ON MUSIC

For CONSERVATORIES, COLLEGES PRIVATE TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS

A Scientific Basis for the Granting of School Credit for Music Study

POST GRADUATE DIVISION
(GRADE FIVE)

CHAPTER I

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POST GRADUATE DIVISION

[GRADE V]

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POST GRADUATE DIVISION

[Grade V]

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I

POLYPHONY: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WELL-TEMPERED CLAVICHORD

§1. In his remarkable set of Preludes and Fugues, entitled "THE WELL-TEMPERED CLAVICHORD," Bach foreshadowed, with the vision of a prophet, the modern development of piano technic, just as in the bulk of his work he foreshadowed the development of modern harmony. To appreciate this historical marvel we must remember that in neither field did this master find the tools ready to his hand. The harpsichord of his time was a mere indication of the pianoforte that was to come, and it possessed few of the acoustic properties of the more modern instrument. It had neither the power to sustain tones nor to produce the varieties of tone color which is one of the principal charms of the piano of today.

Similarly, Bach did not even have by heritage a system of scales and of tuning which would make it possible to modulate from any Key to all the others at will, and which could serve as a medium for the wonderful chromatic progressions that filled his imagination. He had then, to devise the harmonic system—the "equal temperament"—which he needed, after which he wrote his "WELL-TEMPERED CLAVICHORD" to prove its validity. Again, he reformed keyboard technic to fit the new conditions which his works created—though he had to leave to posterity the creation of an instrument that would do justice to his inspiration.

The significance of the title of this great work will be appreciated only by understanding the acoustic difficulties which were involved in tuning. Ever since the time of Pythagoras (circa 500 B. C.) it has been well understood that a tone which is enharmonic with another tone can never be obtained by tuning in a circle of absolutely perfect Fifths—a problem which is as insolvable as the well-known "squaring of the circle." That is, starting from a given tone, say *C,* and tuning successive strings in an ascending sequence of perfect Fifths, the following series will be obtained: *C G D A E B F♯ C♯ G♯ D♯ A♯ E♯ B♯*. Theoretically the tone *B♯* should be identical with the starting-point, *C,* but in practice it has been found that when each tone of the series stands in the relationship of an absolutely perfect Fifth to the tones preceding and following, the final tone will not be the same as the first, but will be much too high in pitch. Mathematically considered, if the first tone of the series, *C,* vibrates at the rate of 256 per second, the final tone (*B♯*) will come out, not as 256, but as 259.436+ vibrations per second. The problem of equal temperament is to tune the series in such a way as to cause the last tone of the series to be the same as the first. This is done by dividing the difference between the above two numbers into twelve equal parts and distributing them among the twelve tones forming the series after *C*. In practice this is done by tuning each Fifth very slightly *flat.*

Although the solution of the temperament problem seems quite obvious at the present day it was not so in Bach's time. The keyed instruments of those days were tuned by a sort of compromise system which consisted in distributing the difference between the enharmonic tones (known in acoustics as the Pythagorian comma) unequally among the twelve Fifths, in such a way that the greater part of this difference occurred toward the end of the series. The practical result was that Keys containing more than four *sharps* or four *flats* sounded so much out of tune that they could not be used unless the instrument were retuned. This fact partially accounts for the infrequency of signatures containing more than four SHARPS or FLATS in the music of this period. The possibilities of diatonic modulation were of course very limited, while chromatic and enharmonic modulations were quite

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impracticable. Bach clearly saw that the future of musical composition lay in opening up these new harmonic possibilities, and that the only way to do it was to insist upon the equal temperament tuning for keyboard instruments. To bring about this change he wrote the WELL-TEMPERED CLAVICHORD, a work containing Preludes and Fugues in all the *major* and *minor* Keys. Bach was said to be so expert at tuning that he could alter the tuning of a clavichord to the tempered scale in fifteen minutes, which it was necessary to do before this work could be played.

As a note of warning to the student before entering upon the study of one of the immortal works of all time, he is reminded that the greatest value of the WELL-TEMPERED CLAVICHORD does not lie in the reform in tuning it effected, or in the contrapuntal mastery which it exhibits, or yet in the technical benefit to be derived from practising it. It is, first and last, MUSIC—the most emotional music ever penned. Mere skill in writing counterpoint would never have enabled it to live and to increase in popularity as it has for two centuries. Because of its spiritual content it has survived when most of the other polyphonic works of the period have perished. The student who undertakes its study with the idea that a Fugue is necessarily a dry, intellectual exercise and a drier thing to practise will fail in his playing of Bach, and, it may be added, will likely fail in everything else he attempts to play. No less a master than Richard Wagner once had this mistaken idea. Expressing to Liszt his views on the subject—that the Bach Fugues are merely ingenious academic experiments—Liszt answered him by going to the piano and playing the magnificent Triple Fugue in *C-sharp minor,* No. IV. Wagner then saw his mistake; "All I heard was melody!" he afterward exclaimed. A marked resemblance between the theme of this Fugue and one which Wagner shortly after used in his Faust overture, is cited as an evidence of how strongly he was impressed by this insight into the greatness of Bach's contrapuntal writings.

PRELUDE AND FUGUE [MUSIC ON PAGE ELEVEN] JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

C MINOR, No. II, from "The Well-Tempered Clavichord" 1685-1750

§2. An indispensable item in the equipment of the modern pianist is a thorough acquaintance with THE WELL-TEMPERED CLAVICHORD. This consists of forty-eight Fugues, each preceded by a Prelude, one for each *major* and *minor* Key, beginning on *C* and ascending chromatically. This particular Prelude and Fugue, which is in *C minor,* is then the second of the series.

The spirit which we have come to associate with that tonality—of throbbing passion and subdued pathos—so completely permeates the PRELUDE that one is at once reminded of the other great works in the same Key, such as the Fifth Symphony and the Sonata Pathétique of Beethoven.

Considering, first the PRELUDE, the form suggests a natural division into three sections. The first of these ends in the *relative major* (14); the second concludes in a series of *arpeggio* passages over an Organpoint on *G,* (27); the third, beginning with a *Presto*—"rattling like hail in a storm," in the words of Van Bruyck—returns by way of an *adagio* "recitative" to the original *tempo* [*Allegro*] for the last four measures.

A satisfactory performance of this Prelude requires the distinct articulation of every note. Good tone production is essential throughout, but special care must be taken with the fifth finger in either hand, which performs an important melodic function.

§3. As has been often stated throughout the earlier Grades of the University Course, all even-note studies and pieces should be made to do more than a single technical duty. Thus with this Prelude, the possibilities of applying variants are almost endless, although the student should be so familiar with the earlier forms of variants that the application of them should be made without further direction. Taking into account the advanced proficiency of the student, it is possible now to treat of variants which deal with other elements besides *motive* dynamics. These new variants will call for broader musicianship, as they

often involve the addition of other voices, and doublings of the passages as originally notated. They treat also of interlockings, afterstrikings, etc.

It is thought that the *C minor* Prelude was first notated in Triplet groups rather than in the four-note figure as it now appears. In its original form as Triplets, it serves as an excellent study for the Trill, and should be so adapted by the student and thoroughly practised. To continue the figure during the *quasi arpeggio* passage the design shown in Illustration No. 1 may be used.

Busoni recommends this mode of procedure, and in his edition of this Prelude he has supplied the student with a number of variants which almost exhaust the technical possibilities. Among these is a very valuable interlocking study for the further development of evenness between the hands. The figure may be divided into eight-note groups as shown in Illustration No. 2.

Illustration No. 1

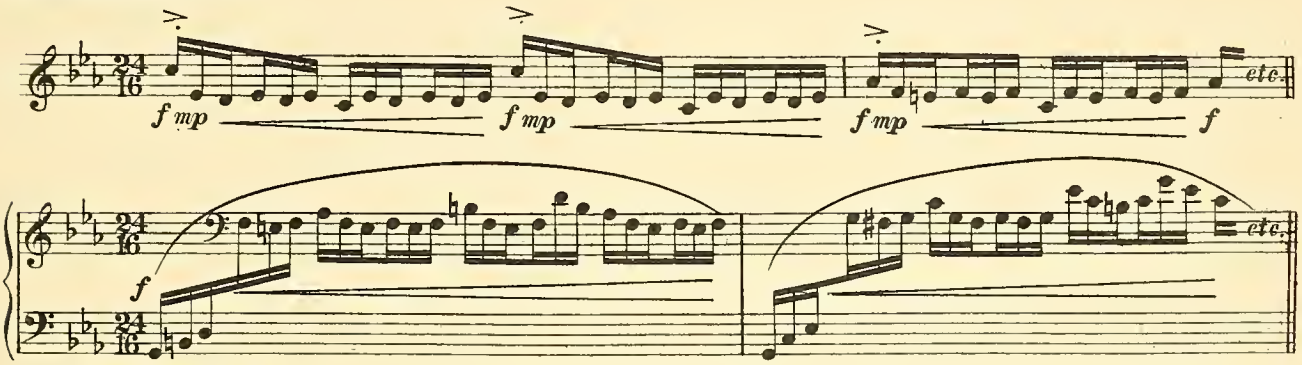


Illustration No. 2

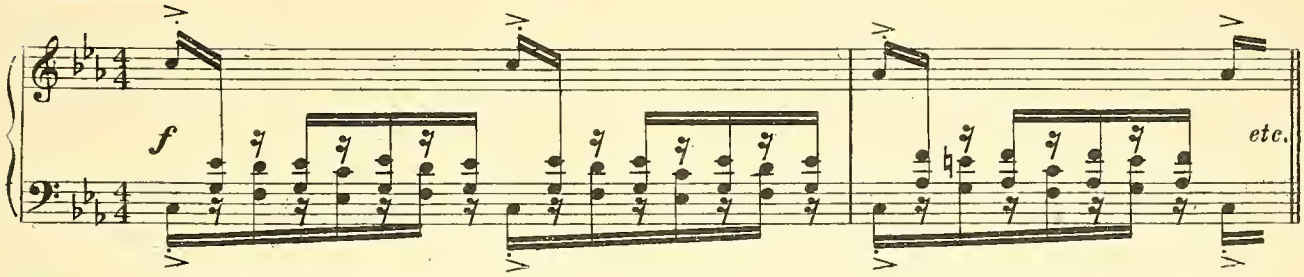


Illustration No. 3

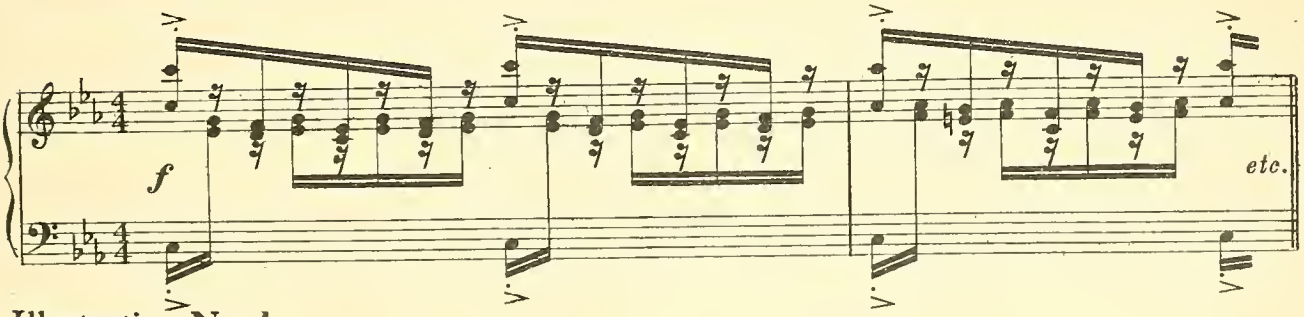
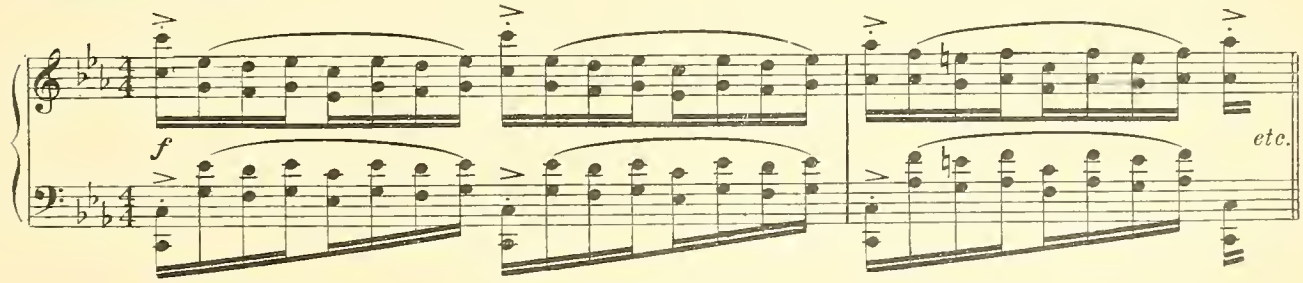


Illustration No. 4



After the interlocking Sixths have been mastered, the student will find it a simple matter to invert the design into Thirds. as shown in Illustration No. 3.

Another form recommended by Busoni is that which doubles the figure in Octaves, producing Octaves upon the accents and Double Sixths and Thirds elsewhere within the design. A few irregularities occur while carrying out the figure. Where these are encountered the student should exercise sufficient ingenuity to master the obstacle by substituting some other interval than the Sixth or Third in a manner to conform with the general direction of the movement of the parts. Illustration No. 4 will suggest many possibilities to the student.

§4. The FUGUE presents the *C minor* tonality in a wholly different light. Here the grandeur and seriousness of the Prelude have given way to a spirit of light-hearted grace, which is saved from outspoken gaiety only by the somber color of the *minor mode.* The Exposition occupies eight measures (1-8). It is followed by two further eight-measure sections, the first ending in *G minor* (17), the second on the Dominant Seventh of *C minor,* delaying the Cadence through an elongation of five measures. This is followed by a short Coda (29). The Fugue is remarkable for its very sparing use of contrapuntal devices. The *major* ending of both Prelude and Fugue is a characteristic harmonic peculiarity, frequently found in the works of Bach. It is known to harmonists as the *Tierce de Picardie.*

The Theme must be clearly enunciated each time, with its obstinate reiteration of the *C;* also the characteristic alternation of *legato* and *staccato* must be emphasized. At its last appearance in the Bass (26) the Theme may with good effect be doubled; that is, played in Octaves, as indicated. Such a doubling is not to be considered a liberty taken with Bach's style, much less a violation of it, nor a mannerism. It is a slight change calculated to bring out more clearly his idea, and although the indiscriminate doubling of the bass part should by no means be allowed, an occasional change of this nature is advisable when the conditions warrant it. In this connection it should be remembered that almost all of the keyboard instruments of Bach's time provided for these doublings. The organ always doubled the pedal part in Octaves, as it does to-day; sometimes the other parts as well. In that day, the harpsichord and clavichord also had various stops resembling those of the organ, whereby parts could be doubled; some instruments even had two manuals, or keyboards, for the hands. These facts, to a great extent, account for the absence of Octave passages in Bach's works. When a passage in Octaves was wanted, it could generally be obtained by connecting an Octave coupler and playing single notes.

§5. In studying the Fugues of Bach the student should remember that in his treatment of this style of composition Bach was a law unto himself. He did not consider himself bound by precedents, and in this fact lies his greatness. Probably more fugues were written before Bach's time than have been written since, yet they were completely eclipsed by Bach's genius, and are now of interest only to the student of musical archeology. By Bach's time fugal composition had degenerated into a set of mechanical rules which consisted of statements as to what could or could not be done. It was no trouble for anyone with a fair knowledge of counterpoint to turn out fugues according to the approved pattern—the specifications were all there, all one had to do was to follow them. The relations of Subject and Countersubject were fixed; the modulations had to follow a certain scheme; every fugue had to contain at least one *stretto,* and must end with an organpoint —these were only a few of the rules to which every fugue had to conform in order to be acceptable to the purists.

To Bach such rules were servants, not masters; accordingly we find him systematically violating practically every item in the academic schedule. To Bach the possibilities inherent in the theme itself was the governing factor in the subsequent development of the fugue. The fugue was the logical outgrowth of what the theme suggested, not an artificial structure governed by rigid rules. One of the

last of the Academics, a well-known teacher of counterpoint in Germany, used to tell his pupils that "there was not a single correctly written fugue in the whole Well-Tempered Clavichord." This is a fortunate fact, if by "correctly written" we understand the mechanical concoctions of medieval times.

The *C minor* FUGUE is perhaps more strictly written than most of the others. The Countersubject, consisting of the descending passage of *sixteenth* notes followed by three groups of *eighth* notes (3) accompanies the Subject at every appearance except the last. In many instances Bach did not retain the Countersubject in this consistent manner, which according to the old rules he should have done; but in those cases where he did not, he followed the dictates of a higher consistency. This FUGUE contains no *stretto* treatment of the Subject, probably for the reason that the repetition of the first three notes of the Subject contains in itself a suggestion of *stretto,* thereby rendering an actual *stretto* inappropriate.

PRELUDE AND FUGUE [MUSIC ON PAGE TWENTY-TWO] JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

G MAJOR, No. XV from "The Well-Tempered Clavichord" 1685-1750

§6. This PRELUDE and FUGUE is one of the half-dozen which, out of the entire forty-eight constituting the Well-Tempered Clavichord, may be regarded as suitable for concert performance. All of them, of course, deserve serious and exhaustive study, but only a few permit of an adequate presentation in the limited time afforded in a single recital.

The Prelude

Very characteristic of the piano idiom is this PRELUDE. It should be played in a flowing, undulating style. The short melodic phrases contain the elements of real lyric feeling and sentiment. The idea that the music of Bach should be performed with dry formality is one of the great errors to which students are liable. As a matter of fact, there is no composer whose works offer greater opportunity for the expression of all phases of emotion.

The short phrases in the middle section (11) (12) should be played gracefully, and the ensuing short melody in *C major* (13), repeated sequentially in *D major* and *G major* (14) (15), rises to a point of almost dramatic utterance.

This Prelude is one of the few pieces by Bach that may be played in a brilliant style, approaching that of modern writers. Generally, the importation of this style into the classics is to be deplored, as these works should be interpreted in the spirit of the day in which they were written. But Bach was a prophet. He anticipated modern developments to an extent that is surprising when one considers the state of musical art in his time. The modern keyboard idiom, with its brilliant technical effects, was forecast by Bach in a few of his clavichord pieces, and the present instance is one which the student may safely invest with a modern reading without fear of committing an anachronism.

Attention is called to the alternation of climaxes in the second half of this Prelude (11-15). The dynamic changes, as suggested by the upward and downward movements of the figure, should be effected by each hand independently of the other.

Former editions of this PRELUDE employ the time signature 24-16 for the right-hand part, and 4-4 or also 24-16 for the left-hand part. Bach's known aversion to writing a Triplet was of course responsible for this notation. In view of the fact that both right- and left-hand parts are in 8-8 time, and that the formerly used signature does not apply equally well to all measures of the PRELUDE, the liberty has been taken of using the more consistent time-signature.

The Fugue

The satisfactory playing of a Fugue demands, first of all, complete comprehension of the musical substance. No amount of finger facility, intuition or quickness of ear will take the place of this intellectual grasp. It follows, therefore, that the first step in learning a Fugue should be a complete analysis of its structure. Each appearance of the Sub-

ject should be carefully traced, also the Countersubject, if the Fugue has one. The Episodes likewise should be carefully analyzed, and the material from which they are derived defined in detail. The present Fugue has no Countersubject, as that term is generally understood; but it has a counterpoint which is retained during part of the second and third announcements of the Subject, and used in a more or less consistent manner throughout the remainder of the Fugue. If the student will compare this retained counterpoint with the Countersubject in the Fugue in *C minor* (Chapter I) he will see clearly the difference between a contrapuntal passage which is merely used again and a real Countersubject which forms an indispensable part of the polyphonic texture.

The rhythmical plan of this Fugue, if one considers only the bare notes, does not exhibit very much variety. After the Exposition is well started there is litle interruption of the steady flow of *sixteenth* notes, in one part or another, up to the end. This is the way the Fugue looks; but to play it this way would result in intolerable monotony. The continuous rhythm of *sixteenth* notes must be checked, as it were, and rendered less obvious, by a delivery of the Subject which will command attention and excite interest.

The Subject ends on the first note of the fifth measure. It consists of three small sections, or "parts," which, however, are distinguished in an aesthetic, rather than in a formal, sense. The first measure consists of a short melodic figure and a sequence of it one step higher in the scale. This measure should be played in an even *legato* throughout, not exaggerating the sequential formation by detached phrasing, as it is sufficiently obvious without this. In the second and third measures the style changes abruptly; *sixteenth* notes are abandoned for *eighth* notes; *legato* gives way to *staccato;* stepwise progressions are varied by wide leaps; the note of greatest value comes at the end of the measure instead of at the beginning, and is accented; and the sequential formation is partly replaced by plain repetition (the first three *eighth* notes) and partly retained, but extended over two measures instead of one (the skip of the Seventh). Thus in several respects the second and third measures are the direct antithesis of the first measure. They constitute the characteristic feature of the Subject. In the fourth measure a return is made to the style of the first measure. Analyzed in this way, it is seen that the Subject is an illustration in miniature of the fundamental principles of musical form—those of Statement, Departure and Return—principles which find fuller expression in Parts I, II and III of the Three-Part, or Ternary forms, and which culminate in the Exposition, Development and Recapitulation of the Sonata *Allegro.* If these facts are thoroughly grasped, and applied by the student in the working-out of this Fugue, his interpretation will never suffer from monotony.

With the completion of the Exposition (15) the Subject is inverted (20) and is answered in the Key of the Subdominant, merging into an Episode (34) which leads to the re-entry of the Subject in its original form (38), but now in the *relative minor.* Thenceforward the appearances of the Subject and its inversion are easily recognizable.

Only after the material has been entirely absorbed by the student, and an accurate performance from memory is easily possible, does the real task begin. A good Fugue, like any other composition of worth, has a mood value which the pianist must make clear to the listener. In this particular example of the Fugue form, the spirit of humor and sprightliness must always be present. In other words, if the listener hears this work and does not smile, the performance is a failure, no matter how perfect it may be as an example of keyboard technic and dynamic control. To achieve this effect is, of course, a difficult task; but the pianist has no greater reward than the feeling of satisfaction resulting from the obvious enjoyment of his audience, as the result of a well-played Fugue.

And even if a Fugue is never played in public no amount of practice devoted to it will ever be wasted; for in the mastery of a Fugue there is obtained a mastery of the technic of piano playing which can in no other

way be gained so quickly and so surely, and which also maintains constant interest for the player as does no other form of technical occupation. With Bach musicianship and technic go hand in hand.

In the Fugue the average listener, of course, experiences greater difficulty in appreciating the individuality of a number of melodic voices. While the Fugue is the most scholarly form of composition, and contains all of the elements of music, nevertheless its composite form necessarily limits each one of these to degrees of less magnitude than does a less complex form. Therefore all other forms and styles of composition are merely representative of one or more elements of the Fugal form, but developed with greater freedom.

PRELUDE AND FUGUE [MUSIC ON PAGE SEVENTEEN] JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH

B-FLAT MINOR, No. XXII, from "The Well-Tempered Clavichord" 1685-1750

§7. This Prelude and Fugue is a wonderful example of Bach's ability to do much with little material. The entire Prelude is constructed upon a Theme consisting of three notes of an ascending scale, the third note twice repeated. Out of this material the Master has created one of his most beautiful compositions, one that in depth and intensity of feeling is surpassed by none. The quiet mood which it expresses is almost suggestive of the Chopin of the Nocturnes and Preludes.

In performing this Prelude the short Theme of five notes should move on with increasing volume toward the fifth note, which always falls on an accented count of the measure. The Damper Pedal may be used throughout the Piece, though, of course, great care must be taken to preserve clearness.

At the beginning of the second half of the Prelude (13-14) the effect of a conversation carried on between the different voices should be brought out, each *motive* answered by the next. This may be accomplished by rhythmical phrasing, not only breaking the *legato,* as usual, but making a very short pause after each *motive.*

In the nineteenth measure the inverted form of the first melodic motive, as it appears in the Bass, can be made more interesting and significant by doubling it in the lower octave. This doubling should extend from the second note in the measure to the first note in the next measure (20). At this point is a cadence of such finality that it demands a complete stop on the first tone, almost as though a *fermata* or "hold" were indicated. The *tempo* should be resumed with the following note. In the final measure the Tenor gives out the Subject for the last time, and it dies away to the last note of the Piece. To those who are fond of imagining orchestral tone color in piano compositions, this will suggest the 'cello.

The quality of tone throughout should be lyrical, that is, such as would be suited to song-like melodies, and the melodic progression of every note must be carefully observed. The hand should be held level, the wrist low, the fingers only slightly curved. The spirit of the work is better served if measures are divided into eight counts expressed by *eighth* notes, rather than four counts represented by *quarter* notes.

The FUGUE is one of the most imposing in all piano literature. The massive Theme announced in the first six notes, is treated with constantly increasing interest to the end. The first two notes should in every case be played with strong emphasis—like two heavy blows —and the following notes, even though less prominent, must not suggest the least sussuspicion of weakness, but must be sung.

The Answer consists of the six notes, and begins with the last note of the Theme. In the course of the development it experiences a rhythmical change (46) which is deserving of special notice.

Particular attention should be given to the first Stretto (50), the use of Subject and Answer combined (55), and the *Stretto di maestro* (67), in which the Subjects and Answers are only a half measure apart and all the five voices are engaged at the same time either with the Subject or the Answer—truly a "Master's Stretto."

The heavy tone with which the Theme needs to be brought forward should be ap-

plied to the accented half-notes of the last four measures (72-75) as they descend by Fifths from *D♭* through *G, C* and *F* to the final *B♭*. The *tempo* must be maintained without wavering, but a very slight and gradual *accelerando* throughout the whole Fugue is permissible if it is employed with sufficient skilfulness to enhance the interest without betraying its presence to the listener.

The pedal should be used very sparingly, if at all. At one place only is it absolutely necessary (70), but it may be used in a few other places to assist in the *legato,* if it is changed with sufficient frequency. Such change will generally be made on each *quarter* note, sometimes on *half* notes, but always with reference to the clear leading of the voices and the avoidance of blurred effects.

PRELUDE AND FUGUE [MUSIC ON PAGE TWENTY-NINE] JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH

B MINOR, No. XXIV, from "The Well-Tempered Clavichord" 1685-1750

§8. The *B minor* PRELUDE AND FUGUE is the last in Volume I of the Well-Tempered Clavichord. It forms a fitting close to the first part of that great work. There was an interval of twenty years between the composition of the first and second parts of the Well-Tempered Clavichord. Bach's original intention may have been to write only twenty-four numbers, instead of forty-eight—this is a matter which is as unimportant as it is doubtful; but at all events he chose to bring his labors for the time being to an end by the composition of a monumental work. In the first volume of the Well-Tempered Clavichord practically every shade in the gamut of human emotion is touched upon: the grave and the gay, the sacred and secular, the calm and the dramatic—these are but a few of the many moods which find expression. The present Prelude and Fugue is characterized by rich imagination. It is probably the most imaginative of all the numbers in Part I, and is additional evidence, if such be necessary, of Bach's superb mastery in writing under the restrictions of the polyphonic style, yet imparting to his work the vital element of living emotion.

From a technical point of view the left-hand part offers the greatest possibilities. As it stands in the piece it should, of course, be played *legato,* but it may with profit be studied with other varieties of touch. A useful variant is to transform it into a study in Octaves for the left hand, playing it *semi-legato,* with the pedal on each *eighth* note.

The right-hand part should be regarded as a duet, and an effort made to impart a different tone-color to each of the two voices. It may be helpful to think of the Alto as sounding in the somber tones of the clarinet, while the Soprano is played by the brighter toned oboe. To carry out completely the orchestral simile, the left-hand part might be the 'cellos and double basses.

In the thirty-second measure the Alto takes the melodic lead; that is, the tone power of this voice will predominate. This continues for five measures (37), when the Soprano resumes the lead. A new *motive* presently appears in the Alto (42), and with it the continuous *eighth* note movement of the Bass is relaxed for a moment. This motive is distinctly rhythmical, but expressive.

It is unusual for any definite thematic relationship to exist between a Prelude in the Well-Tempered Clavichord and its following Fugue. The two pieces are related, it is true, but more in an aesthetic than in a thematic sense. For the most part, Bach was content to let the two units of the pair remain apparently unrelated, except in Key, but sometimes a more definite point of contact appears, due to his natural method of working rather than to calculation. These instances are rare, but should be well noted for that reason. Busoni calls attention to three of them in the *B minor* Prelude and Fugue. The first occurs in the twenty-fourth measure of the Prelude, where the notes of the upper voice constitute the *motive* of the episodes in measures seventeen and eighteen of the Fugue. Compare these, observing the Tenor voice in the last half of measure seventeen, and the Soprano of the measure following. The second is a curious resemblance between the Fugue subject and the two measures where the syncopated

motive is introduced (42). This similarity almost baffles exact analysis, but immediately will be felt after experimenting with the two places. The third is in the next to the last measure of the Prelude, where the four *eighth* notes in the upper part are identical with four notes in the Fugue Subject, but in reverse direction. These notes are the last two in the first measure of the Fugue and the first two in the second measure. Reading them backward [*D, E, A, B*] they are identical with the earlier passage. By calling attention to these coincidences it is not meant to convey the impression that Bach deliberately planned them. He probably did not, and on the contrary, was very likely unconscious of the fact that he was so closely welding together the Prelude and the Fugue;—but, as Busoni remarks, this is all the more characteristic of Bach's genius. It is only from internal evidence that one would incline to assert that the two pieces were written in immediate succession; that they are the product of a single mood.

The Fugue Subject is one of severe beauty. It should be played expressively, but not with exaggerated sentiment, as its peculiar contour renders an expressively lyric delivery inappropriate. This Subject, possibly more than any other Fugue Subject in the Well-Tempered Clavichord, demands a thorough comprehension of its harmonic structure, otherwise it is likely to sound like an incoherent jumble of notes. Unlike most of Bach's Fugue Subjects, it contains several modulations. From *B minor* it passes to *E minor,* and then to *F-sharp minor* [the Key of the Dominant] ending with a cadence in that Key (4). These modulations make some very radical changes in the Answer. Instead of answering in the Fifth, according to rule, Bach found it possible only to answer three notes [*D, B, G*] in the Fifth [*A, F, D*]; all of the other notes of the Subject had to be answered in the Fourth instead of the Fifth. The Trill at the end of the Subject is intended as a means of sustaining the tone, a device necessitated by the thin, fleeting tone of the instruments of Bach's time. It should, therefore, be played with this idea in mind, and not as a brilliant embellishment.

After the Exposition the first Episode (17) is a relief from the intricate polyphony of the beginning. It should be played *semplice.* In the third measure of the Episode (19) Bach's sense of humor asserts itself. The first three notes of the Subject are distinctly stated in the Tenor voice, but instead of continuing it disappears, while the Episode continues. It is as if the Subject had been attempted at this point and found impracticable, but there can be no doubt that Bach could have given the entire Subject had he chosen to do so. Two measures later (21) the Subject is again announced, in the same register but in a different voice; this time it is given entire. Bach repeats his little joke later (28), where he again announces the first three notes of the Subject in the Tenor, only to abandon them in favor of Episodical material and to return to the complete Subject two measures farther on (30). In the Episodes the *eighth* note figures should be played *non-legato.*

More detailed analysis of this Fugue is left to the student. He should not fail to do this, for an intelligent interpretation of this great work demands it. The Fugue is more intricate and profound than most of the others in the Well-Tempered Clavichord, but it is a work whose harmonic, melodic and structural beauty can only be made evident by the player who understands the technic of its construction. For those who master it in this way it is capable of making an extremely effective concert number.

§9. The unmistakable individuality in the music of Bach and Beethoven is the measure of their greatness. Not that their style or idiom is essentially different from that of their contemporaries or immediate precursors, for Bach's materials are those of Schütz, Froberger, Buxtehude, and Pachelbel, as surely as Beethoven's are those of Stamaty, Haydn and Mozart. It was not alone due to the complete mastery of these materials—more complete than any of their predecessors had achieved—that these two masters are set apart from all the others; but to the infusion of the personal element, the human and the inspirational, which enabled them to mold the established forms to their own purposes. In other

words, Bach and Beethoven were not merely great composers, but, first and foremost, great men. Music was merely their language. Had they been painters or poets, their message would have been equally wonderful, for whether as painters, poets or musicians, such men are prophets—leaders of human thought and progress.

§10. As to the modernism of Bach, and the justification which some claim for the utilization of modern resources in interpreting his works, A. Marmontel, a French pianist, teacher, composer, and critic, has this to say:

It is a grave error, a musical absurdity, to think that expression should be banished from a good rendering of the works of J. S. Bach for harpsichord, or from his style. Rigorous pianists are wrong in supposing that strict measure and the absence of sonorous graduation are indispensable. According to musicians of learning and taste, Bach, had he possessed the modern piano and organ, would incontestably have indicated the delicacies of meaning certainly present to his own mind. It is puerile to confine ourselves within the limits of a strict and colorless interpretation, and to neglect the graduations of sonority, expression and movement, under the pretext that the imperfections of the harpsichord did not always permit brilliant execution. It is exceedingly difficult to come to a definite conclusion as to the *tempo* taken by the master, but we may affirm that the nature of the sound and the short vibrations of the harpsichord of the period must have had some share in the quicker character given by him to these pieces. The numerous ornaments assigned to the melodic notes had no other object than to conceal the limited duration of the sound. These ornaments no longer possess the importance of the use they once had, and the interpretation of most of the fugued compositions gains greatly at a moderate speed.

The performer must be a harmonist to interpret Bach's works well—perfectly balanced music, in which the musical discourse offers a thousand ingenious touches, and the dialogue between the various parts is always animated and close. The execution demands equal digital independence in the two hands, profound but varied sonority, a connected and well-sustained style, steady time, the exact observance of the marked durations, an intelligent graduation of the *crescendo* and of the *diminuendo*, a delicate distinction of the principal and the incidental phrases, of the motives proposed and of the accompanying parts. As for the fashion, the influence of the spirit of his time in the use of ornaments, Bach is less prodigal than his contemporaries, who were forced by the insufficient sonority of the harpsichord to overload their compositions. We conclude this succinct enumeration of the conditions necessary for satisfactorily interpreting Bach by one remark: The performer must be able to reason out his fingering and the disposal of his two hands in phrases with divided passages, and to employ the rapid substitution of fingers on the same notes—a plan indispensable on the piano as well as the organ, in holding the sound in the sustained notes which it is requisite to maintain for the complete harmony.

Bach's immense superiority over all his contemporaries—not excepting the great Handel himself—has not for sole cause his marvelous skill in employing in perfect order, as well as with incontestable facility and clearness, a large number of voices and instruments in double choruses and double orchestras with real and distinct parts. It must, above all things, be attributed to the happy audacities of his genius, to the innumerable inventions which fill his instrumental and vocal works. After the lapse of two hundred years, we find in these works the harmonic discoveries, the melodic cadences, the charming outlines and the recitative accents of modern masters.

The influence of Bach's known works on the school of harpsichordists and subsequently on that of pianists, has been considerable. All the celebrated masters who suceeded him derived inspiration either from his traditions or from his style. Haydn, Mozart, Clementi, Cramer, Boëly, but more especially Mendelssohn, Schumann and Saint-Saëns have lived upon this strong, harmonic food. On the other hand, Bach left direct representatives of his method, namely: his illustrious sons, Friedemann and Carl Philipp Emmanuel, and a small group of disciples.

Historians affirm that Bach never composed with the aid of the harpischord, and never had recourse to the keyboard to seek his combinations or decide upon his harmonies. Without ability to verify the accuracy of this statement, we quite admit its probability, for the infinite variety of original touches, or unusual arrangements and of ingenious combinations, is much rather the result of head work than that of essays and extemporizings, on which the memory of the fingers would necessarily have produced a monotony of the harmonic formulæ. We may add that the composer whose powerful brain conceives and hears a work created as a whole as well as in its details, without the help of instruments, enjoys an immense superiority over those who do write with one; he avoids reminiscences and unconscious recollections; they work with the *quasi*-certitude of originality. From the special point of view of most musicians, Bach's immense reputation rests principally on his works for the harpsichord and the organ, and on his concertos. But, however marked in these may be his style and influence, we must go further and study the thirty volumes of cantatas, oratorios and choruses, to understand all the creative power of his mind and genius. The most arduous compositions are written with a breadth of design and a certainty equally incomparable. Handel alone was able to attain such sharpness of outline and such freedom of style. The labor disappears, so skilful is its application, and a man must himself have practised fugued composition to appreciate the elegance of the form, the ingeniousness of the touches, and the infinite variety, at the same time as the daring flights, of the composition.

With exceptional creations like these we can compare the works of Handel alone; but, if the latter has sometimes more energetic rhythms, and more striking effects of sonority in the choral masses, Bach is still his superior in the art of combination, of orchestral arrangement, of variety and richness of harmony. Bach's extraordinarily expansive mind dared everything and discovered everything in the way of harmony. It was Bach who illustrated and put in practice the famous chromatic style, which has in our own days been employed to excess. Italian musical genius of the 16th century, snapping the fetters of scholastic art, formed a musical centre, where the genius of melody, breaking loose from the rude embraces of science, found itself in direct communication with pure inspiration, accentuation and expression. Scarlatti, Frescobaldi, Peri, Porpora, Carissimi and Marcello, laid the first stones of the new temple. The crowning of it belongs, however, to Bach, who without leaving his native land, summed up in a definite formula all the progress made by his predecessors and his contemporaries.

MEMORANDA

MEMORANDA

PRELUDE AND FUGUE

C MINOR, No. II

Edited by
Frederick Schweiker

J. S. BACH

PRELUDE

Allegro con spirito

f

p

mf

p

f

dimin.

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p

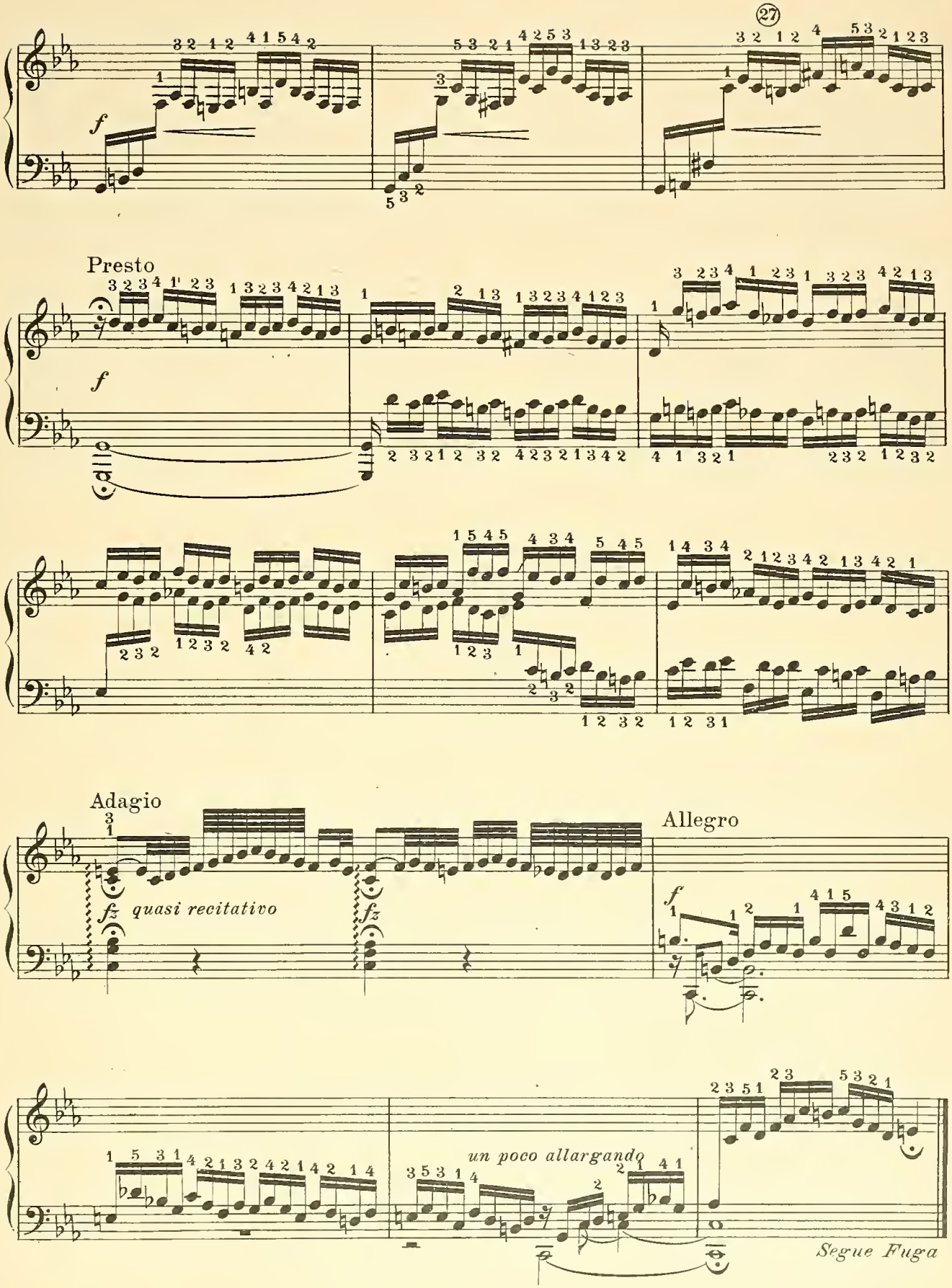
leggiero

crescendo

f

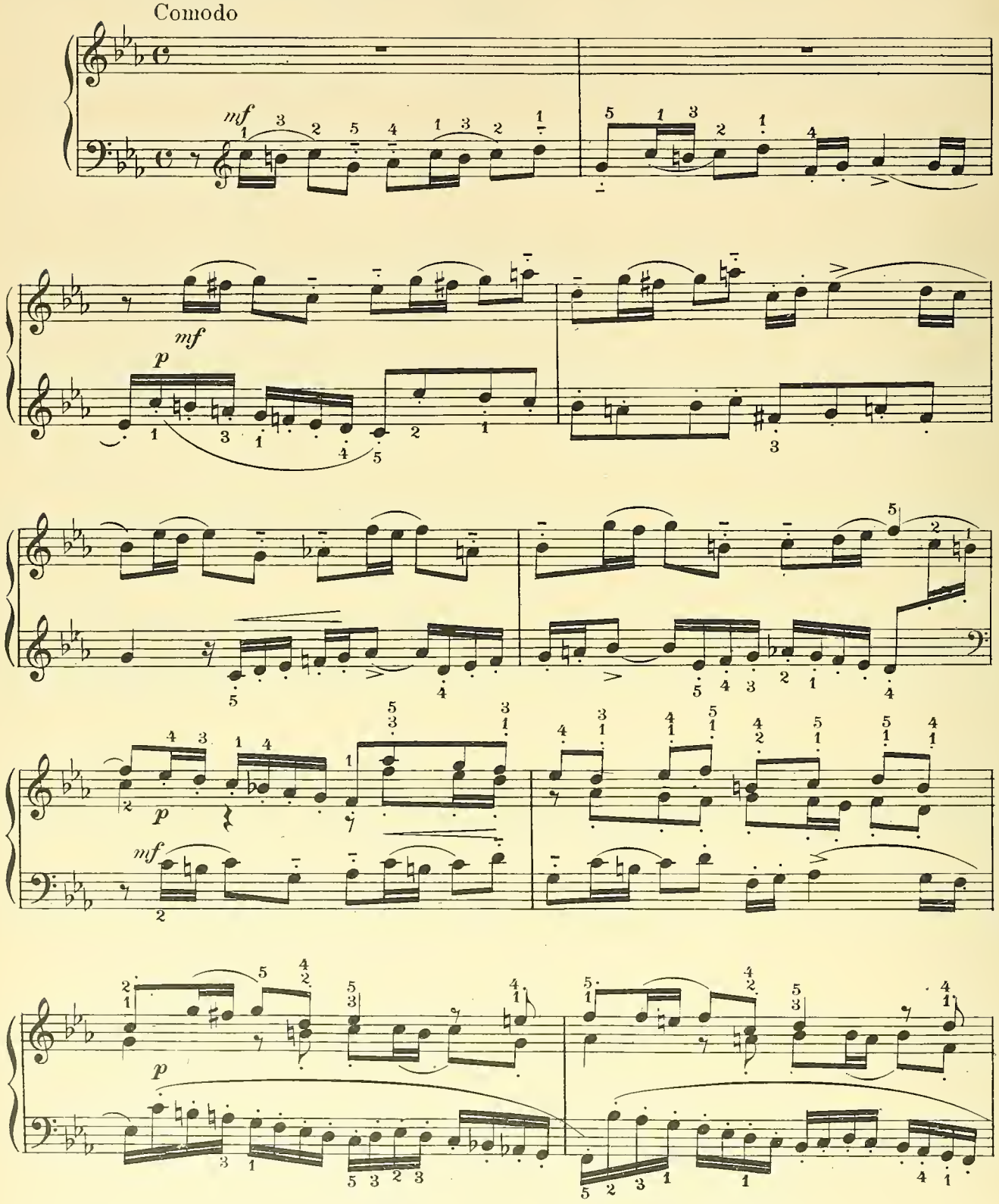
p

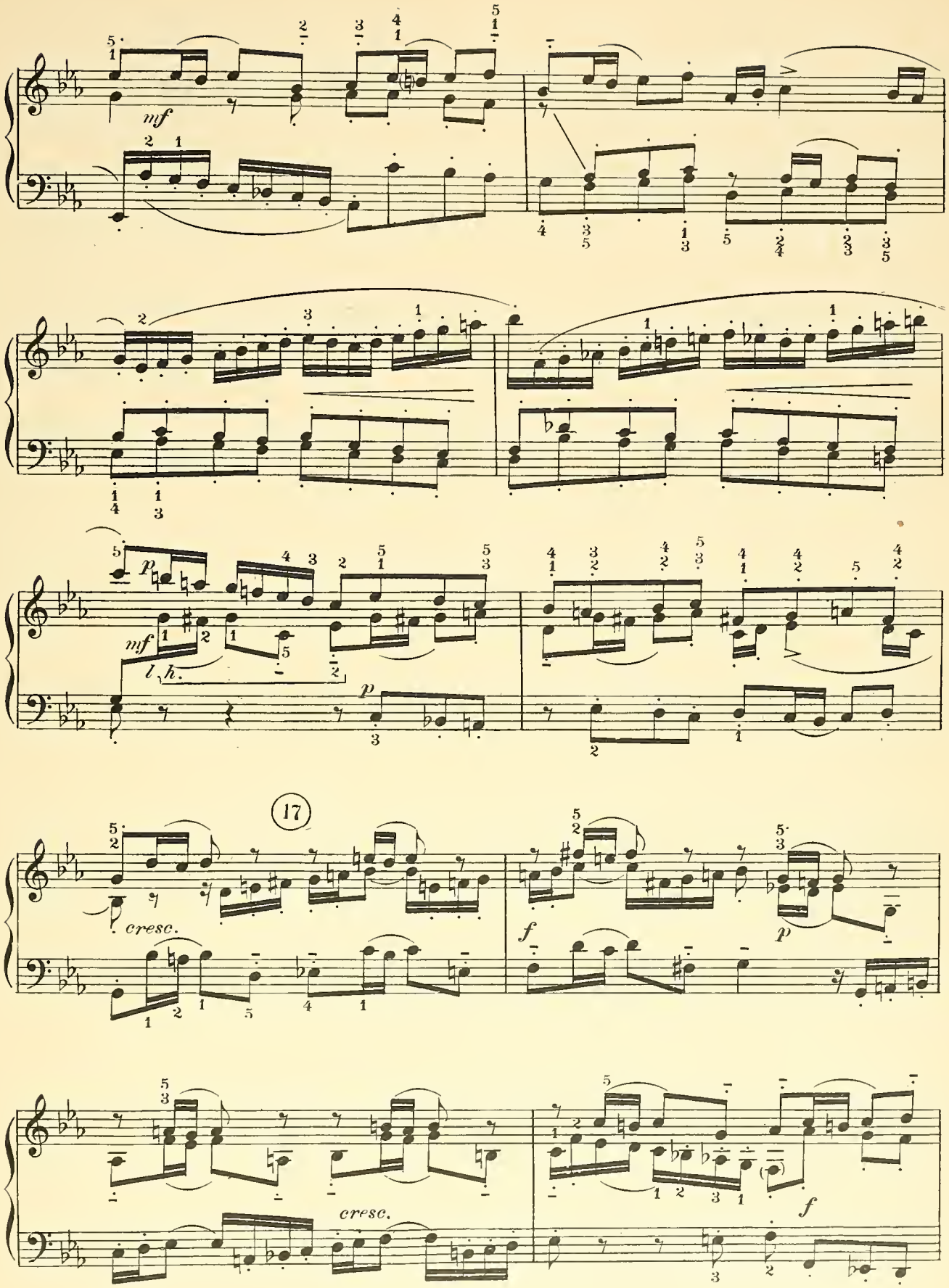
crescendo

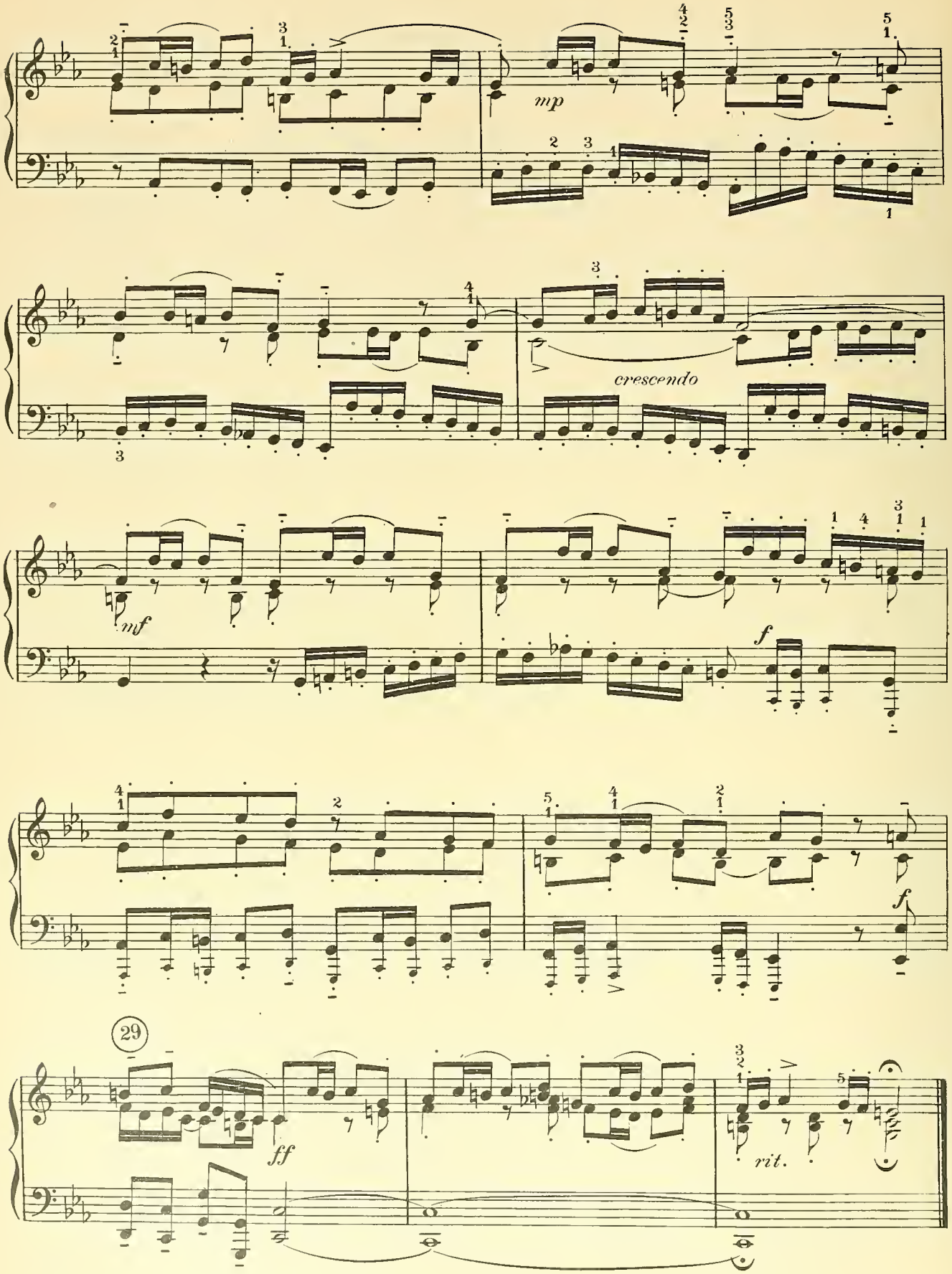

27
Presto
Adagio
quasi recitativo
Allegro
un poco allargando
Segue Fuga

FUGUE (in 3 Voices)

Comodo




mf
p
mf
l. h.
p
17
cresc.
f
p
cresc.
f


mp
crescendo
mf
f
29
ff
rit.

PRELUDE AND FUGUE

B♭ MINOR, No. XXII

Edited by
Francis L. York

BACH

PRELUDE Andante sostenuto (♩= 92)

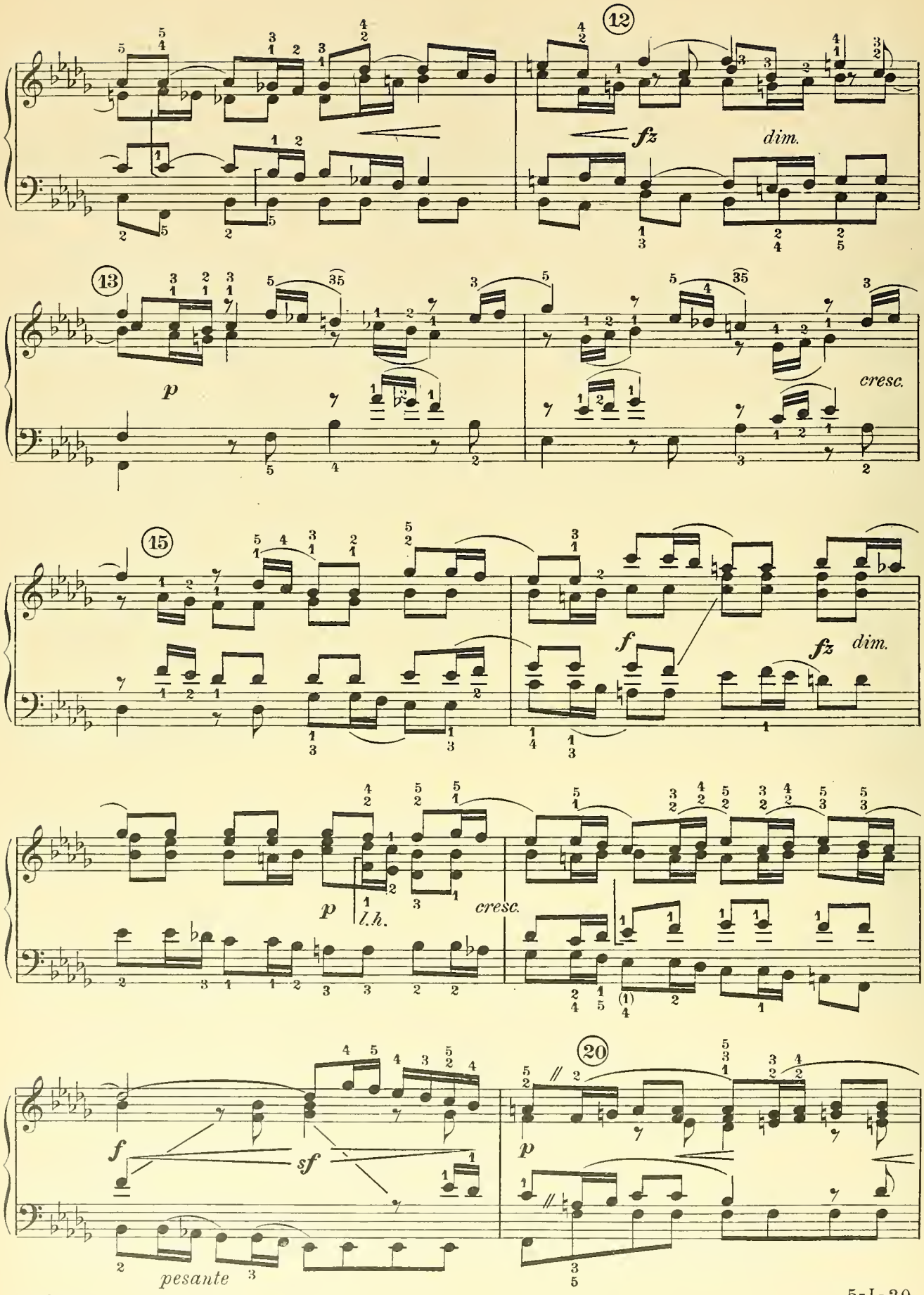
dolce espressivo *p* *cresc.*

f *p* *cresc.*

f *sf* *sf* *dim.*

p *r.h.*

cresc. *f*


12
fz
dim.
13
p
cresc.
15
f
fz
dim.
p
l.h.
cresc.
20
f
sf
pesante
p

cresc.

f rit. ff

a tempo

fz

dim.

p

dim. e rall.

pp

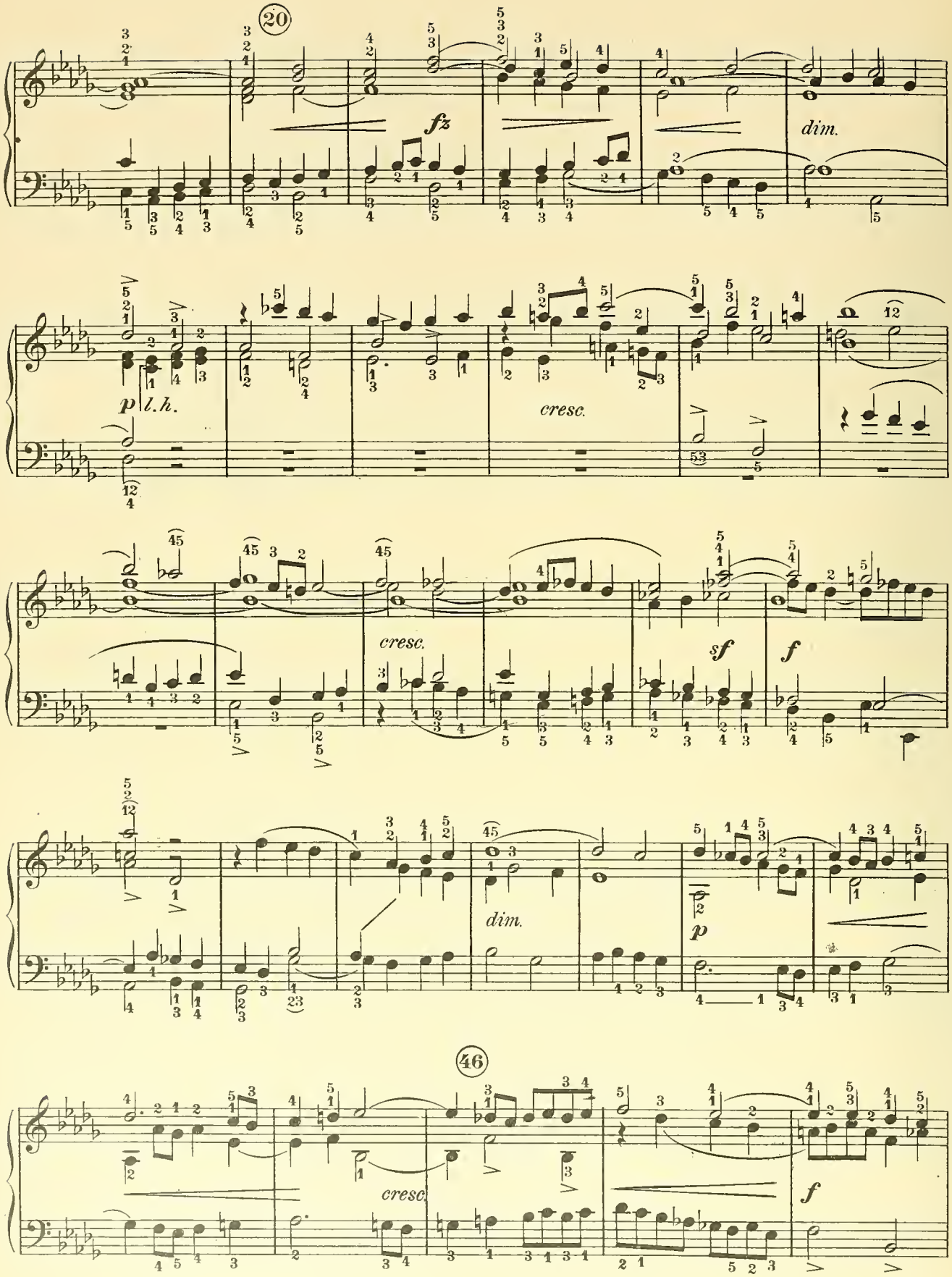
FUGUE (in 5 voices)

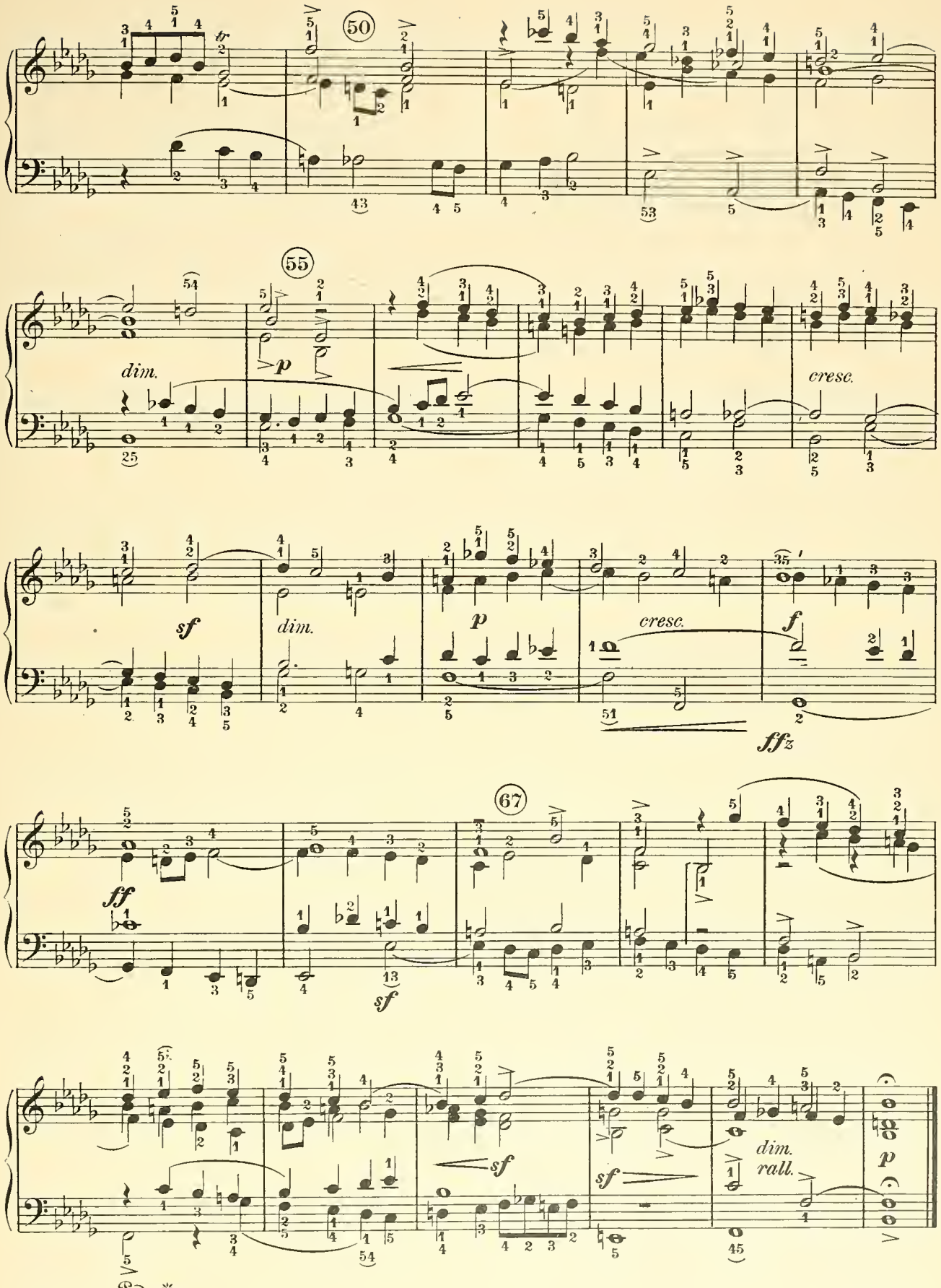
Lento (♩ = 60)

mf p mf p cresc.

sf sf f p sf sf

p cresc. f


20
fz
dim.
p
l.h.
cresc.
cresc.
sf
f
dim.
p
46
cresc.
f


50
55
dim.
p
cresc.
sf
dim.
p
cresc.
f
ffz
67
ff
sf
sf
sf
dim.
rall.
p
Ped. *

PRELUDE AND FUGUE

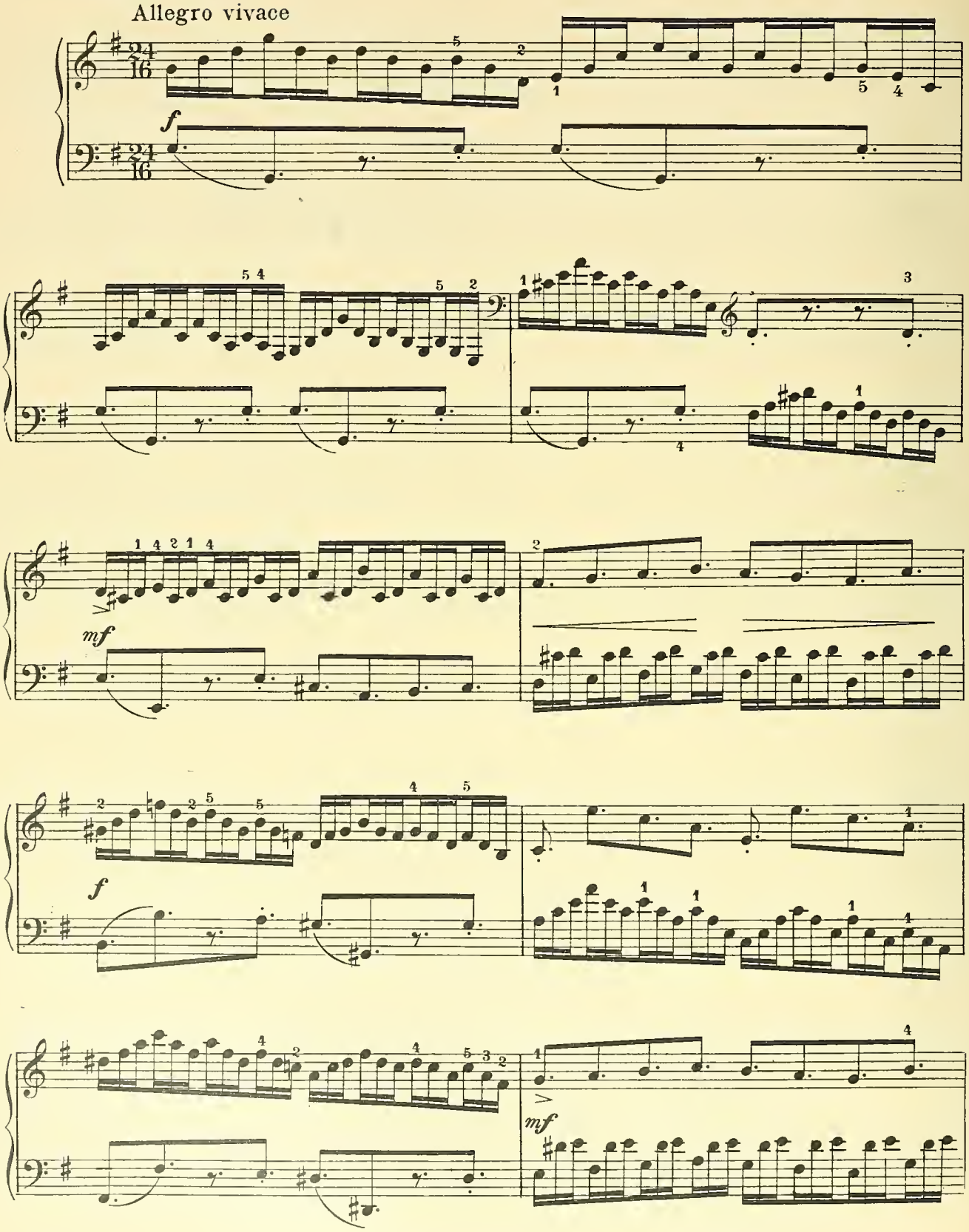
G MAJOR, No. XV

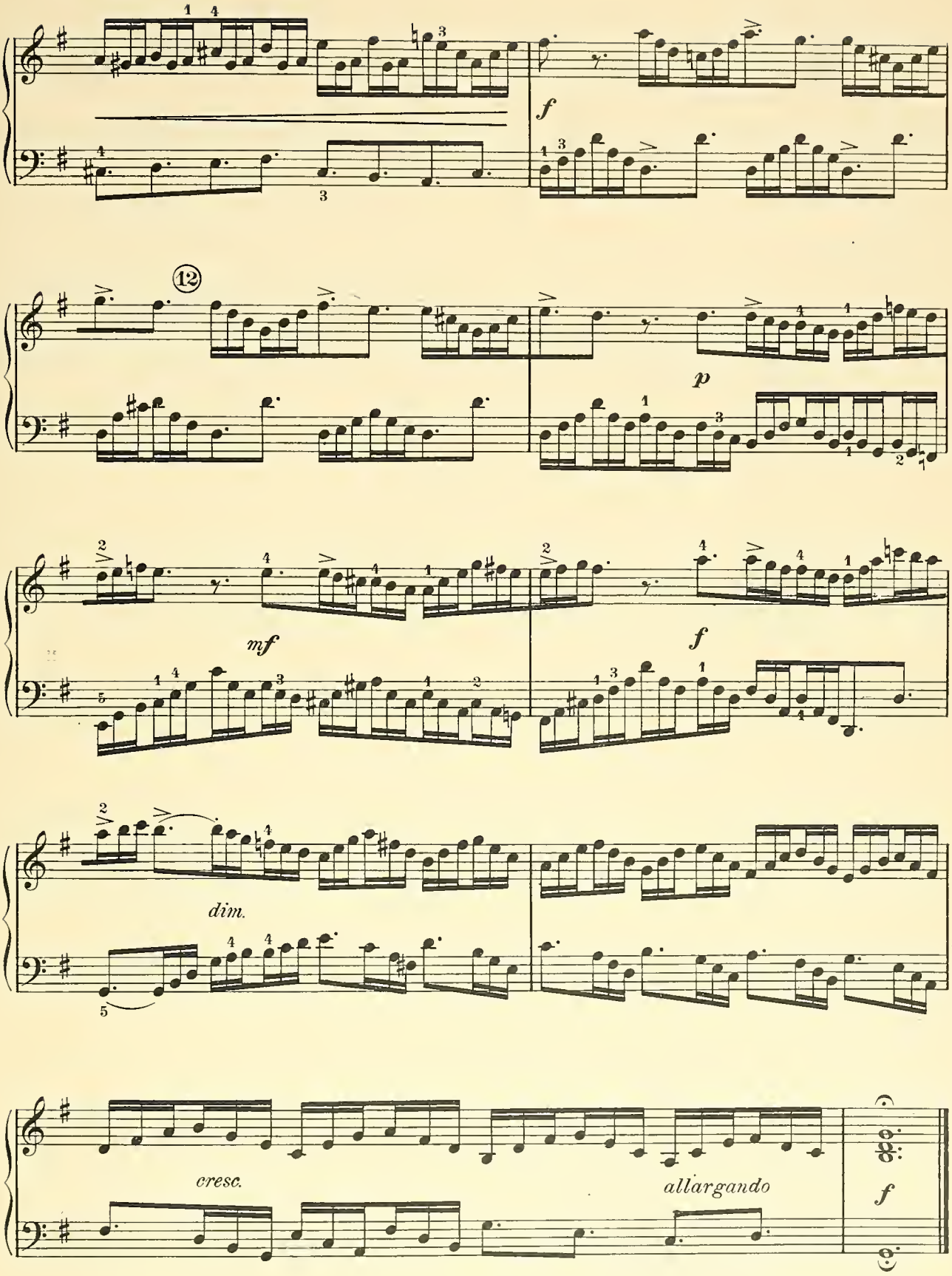
Edited by
Allen Spencer

BACH

PRELUDE

Allegro vivace




f
12
p
mf
f
dim.
cresc.
allargando
f

FUGUE (in 3 voices)

Allegretto

p

p

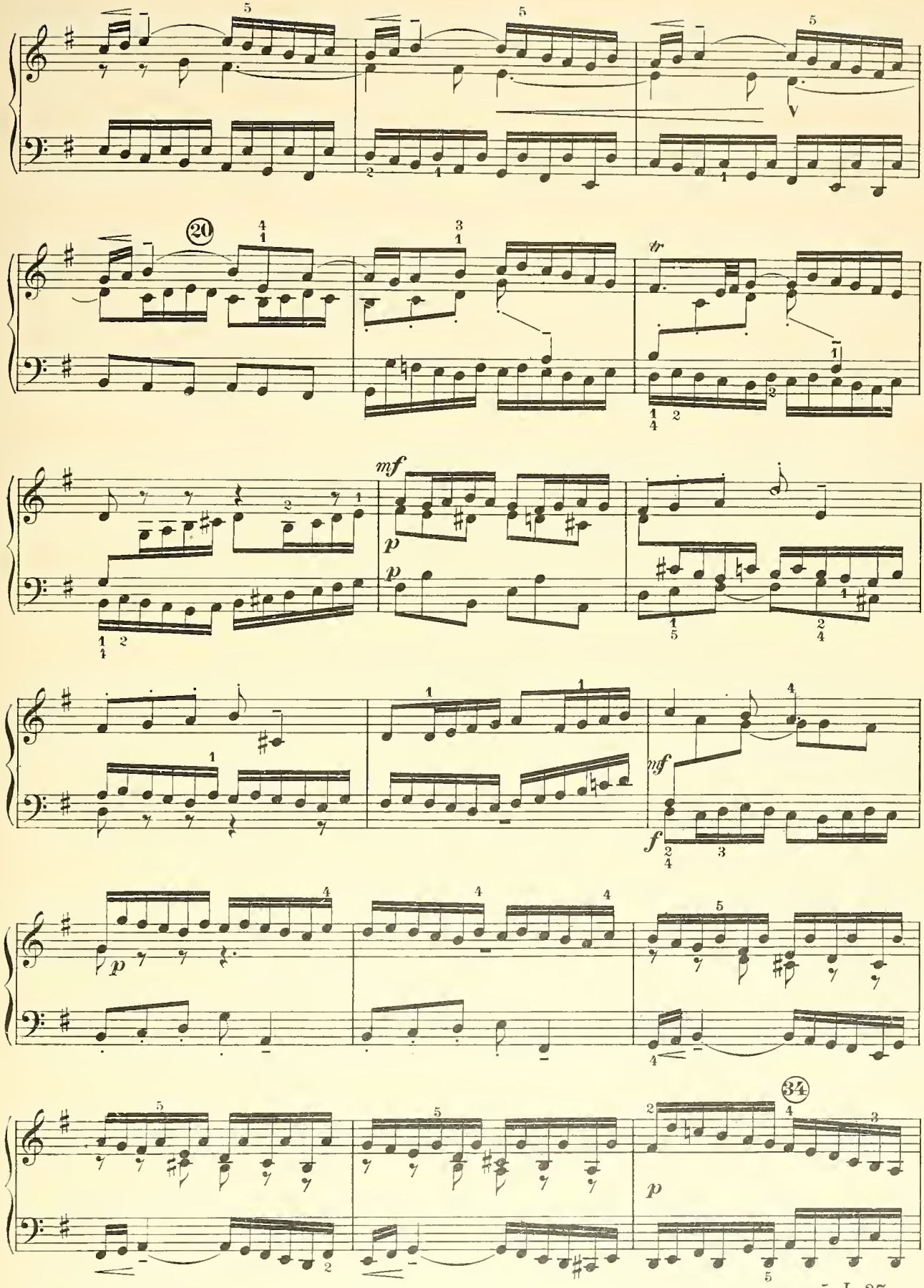
l. h.

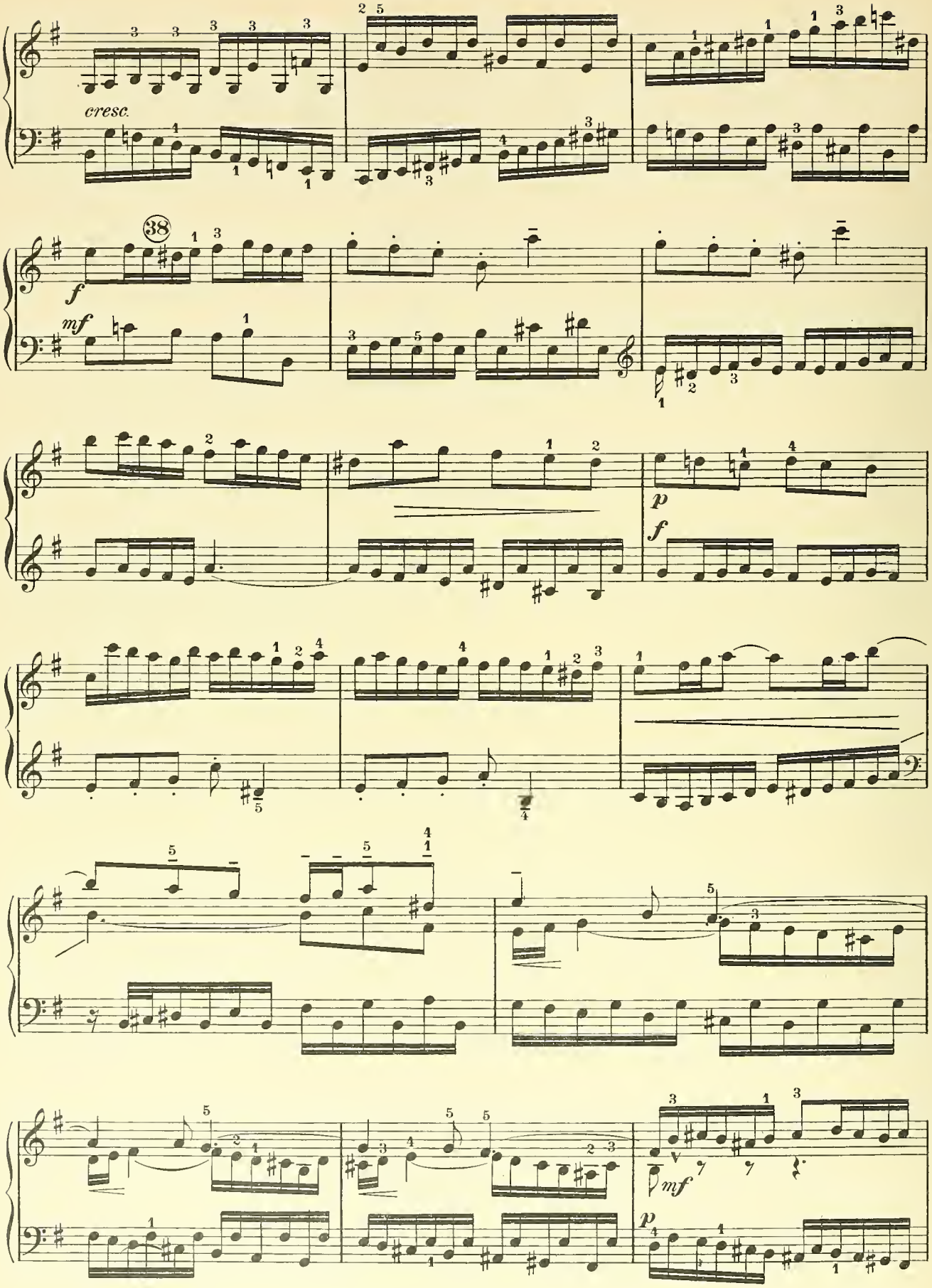
mf

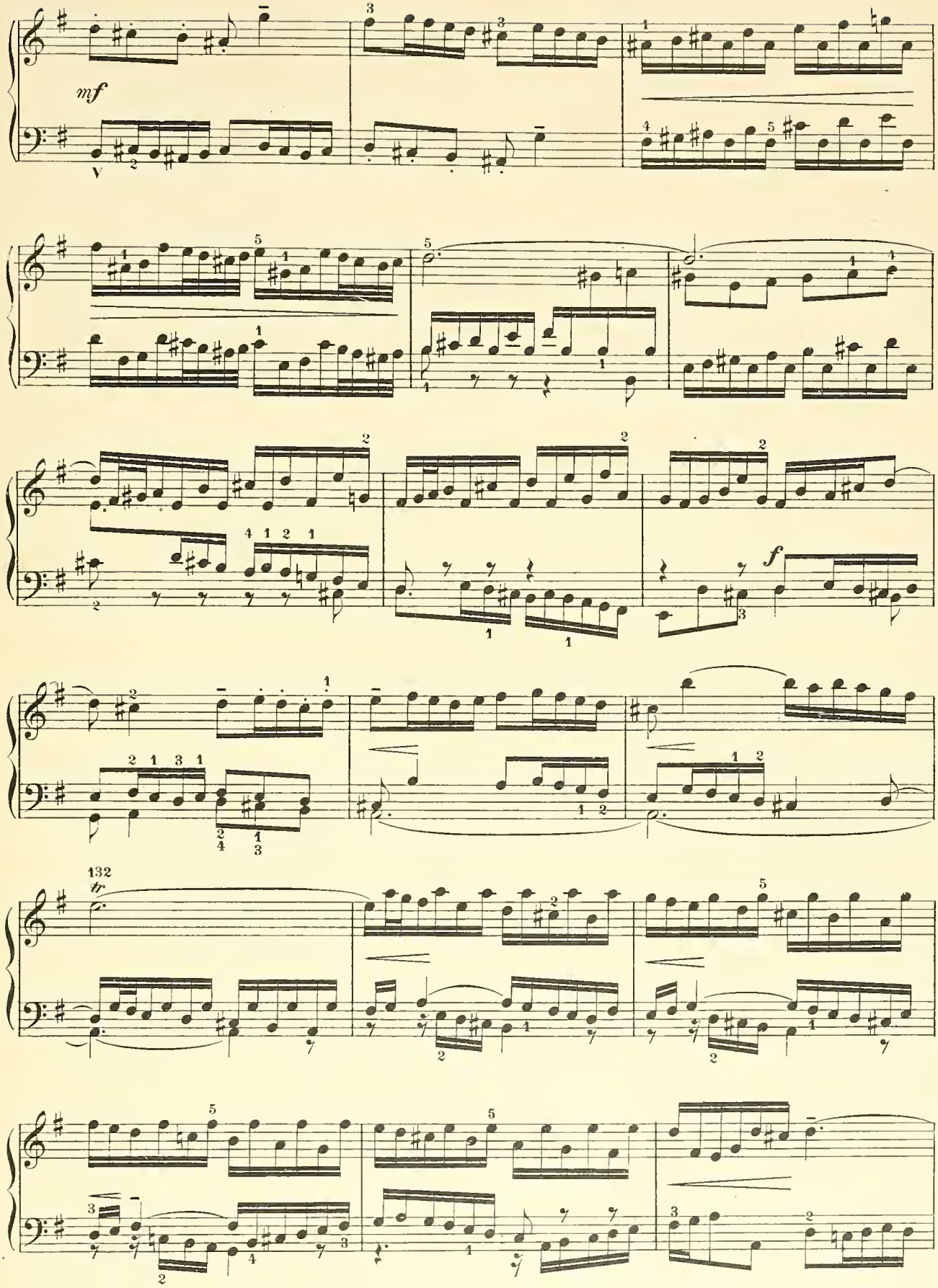
p

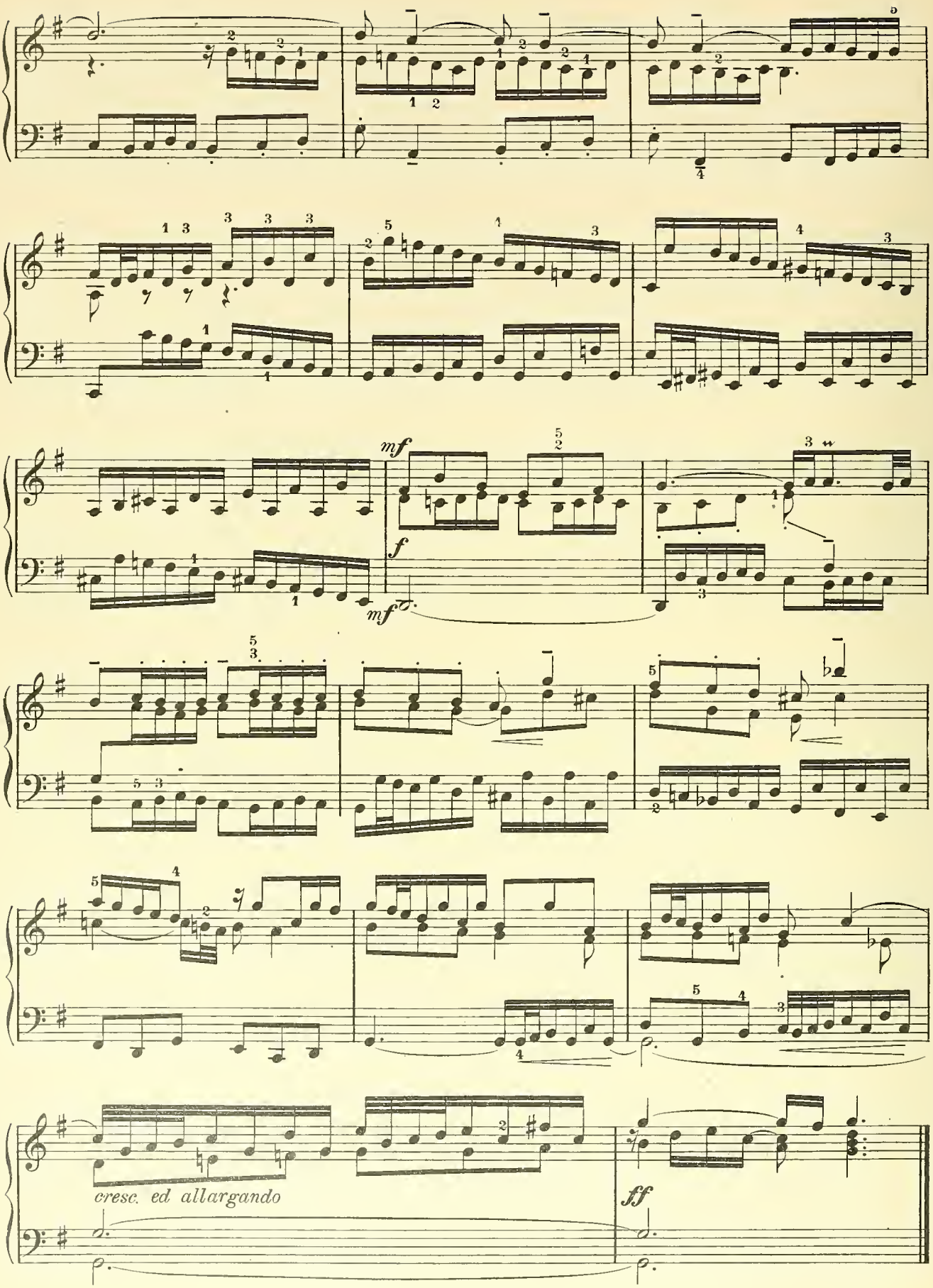
mf

15


20
tr
mf
p
p
mf
f
p
34
p


cresc.
38
f
mf
p
f
mf
p


mf
f
132
tr


mf
f
mf
cresc. ed allargando
ff

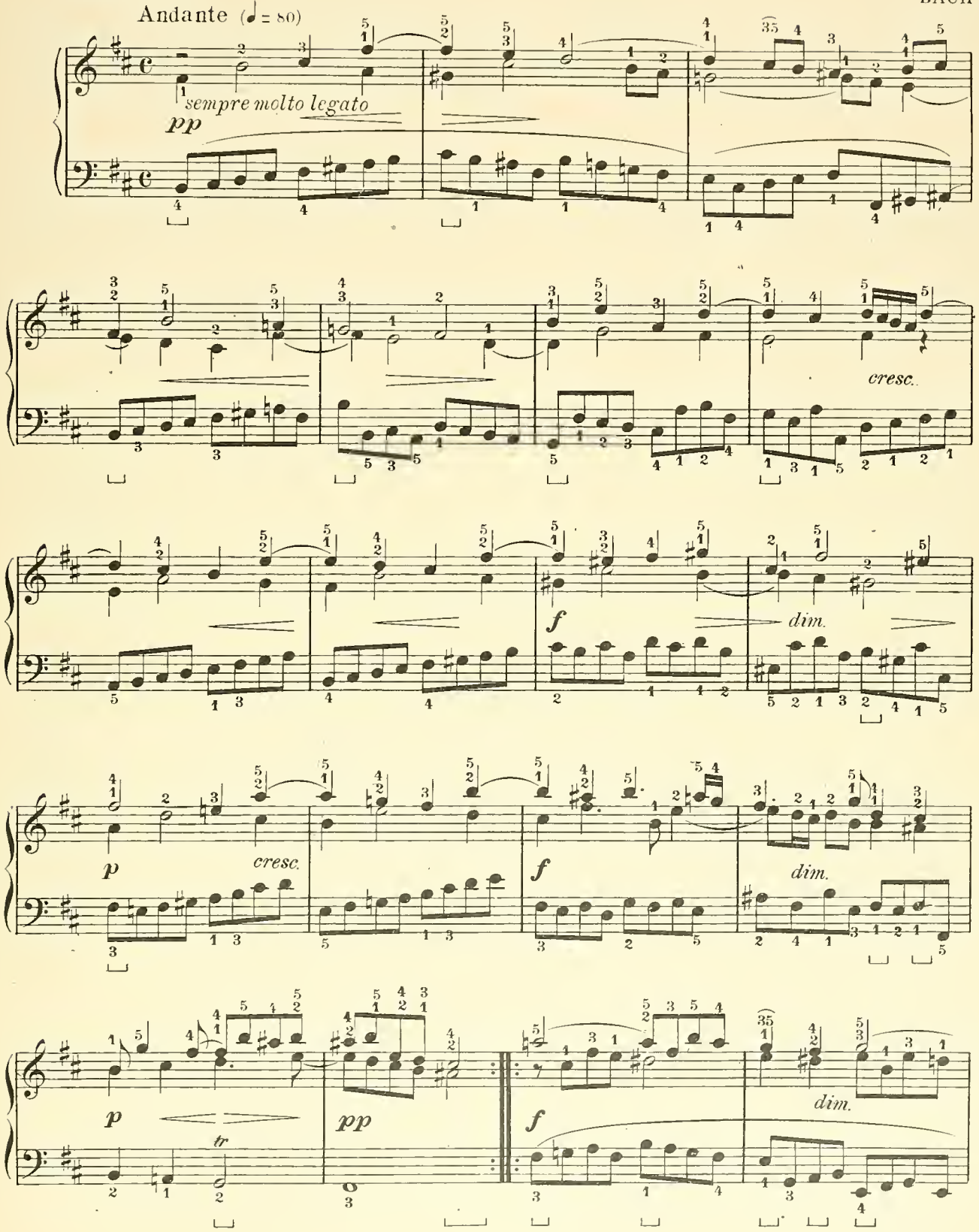
PRELUDE AND FUGUE

B MINOR, No. XXIV

Edited by
Theodora Sturkow - Ryder

PRELUDE

BACH



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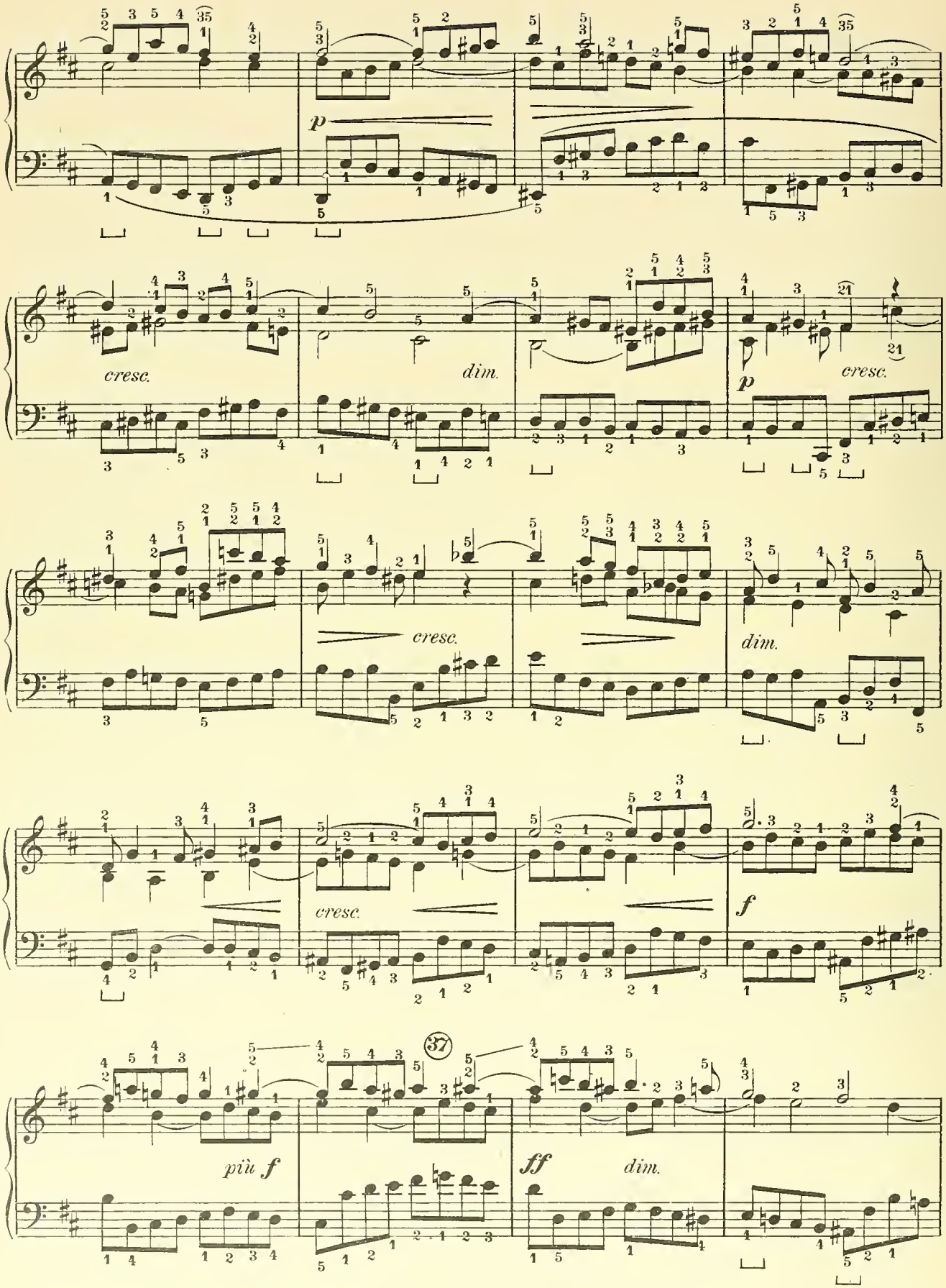
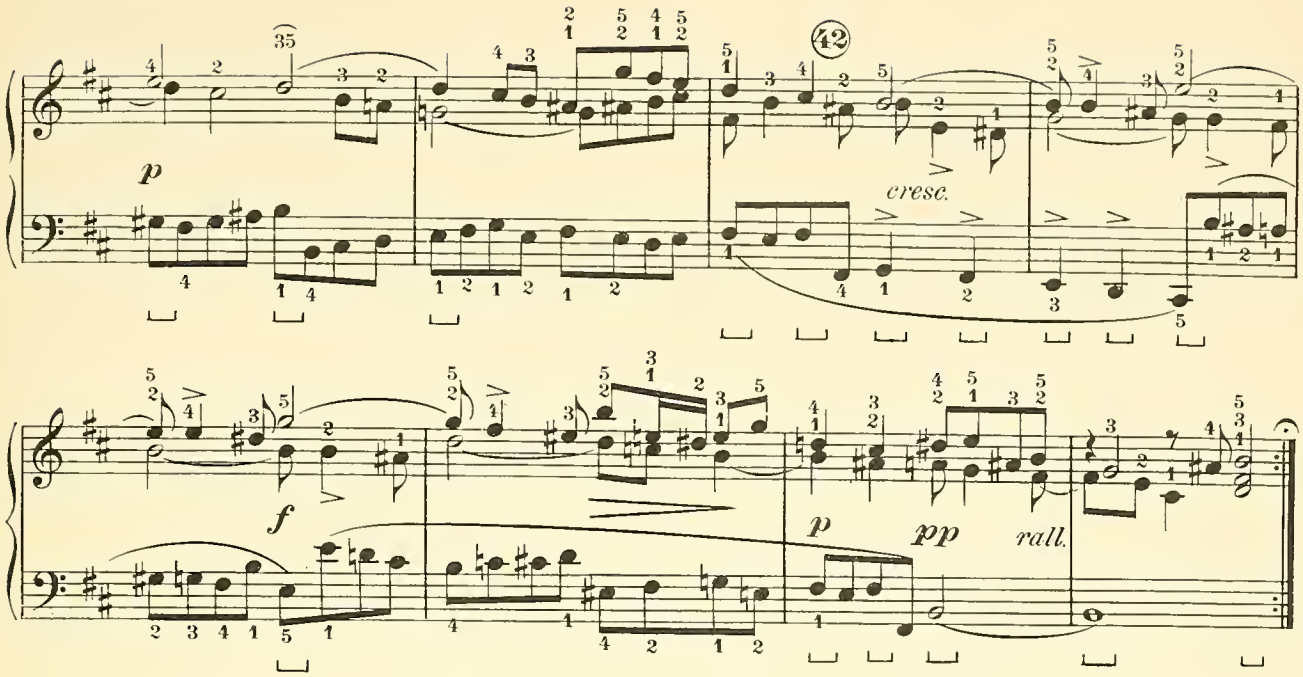
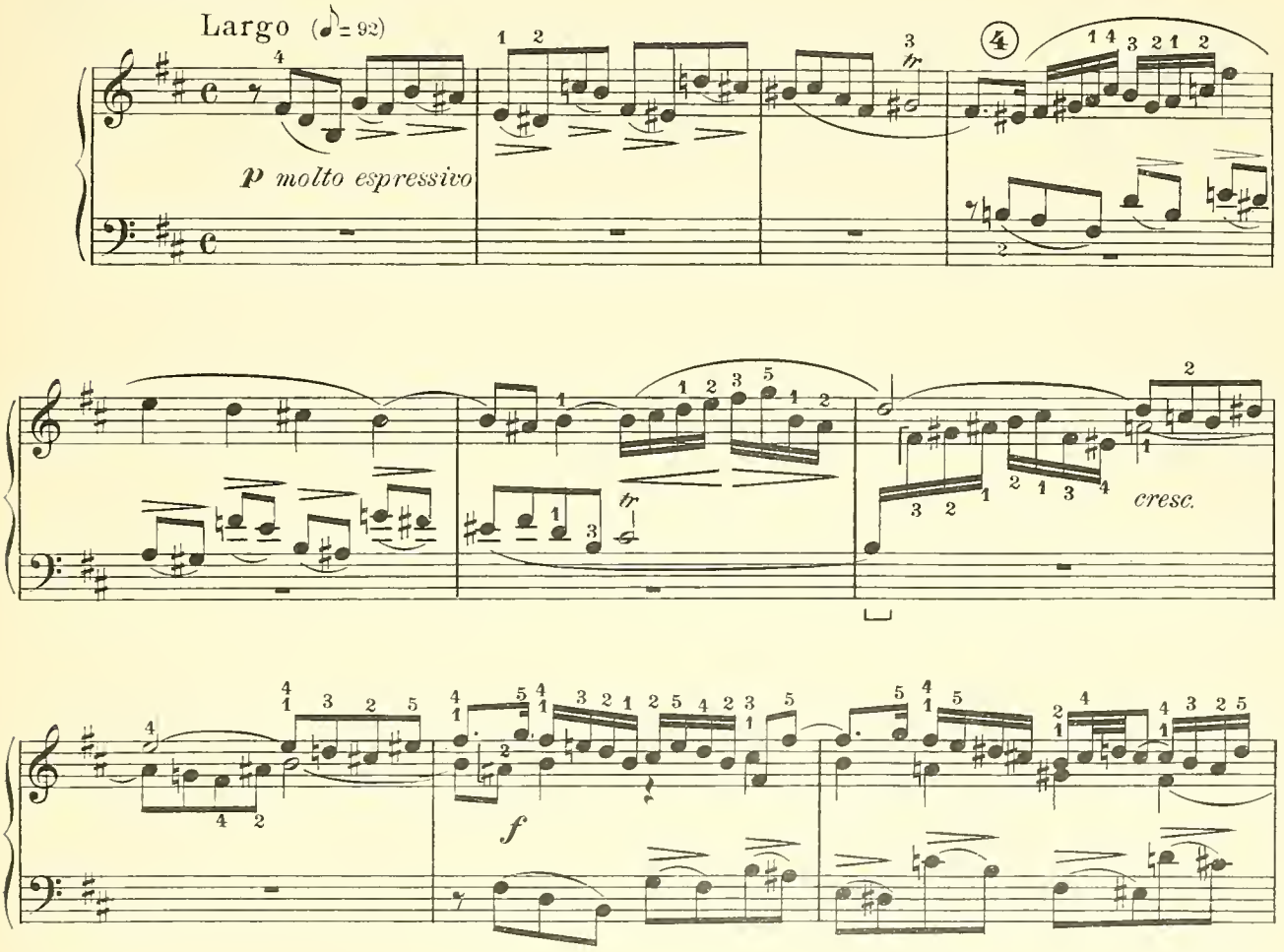
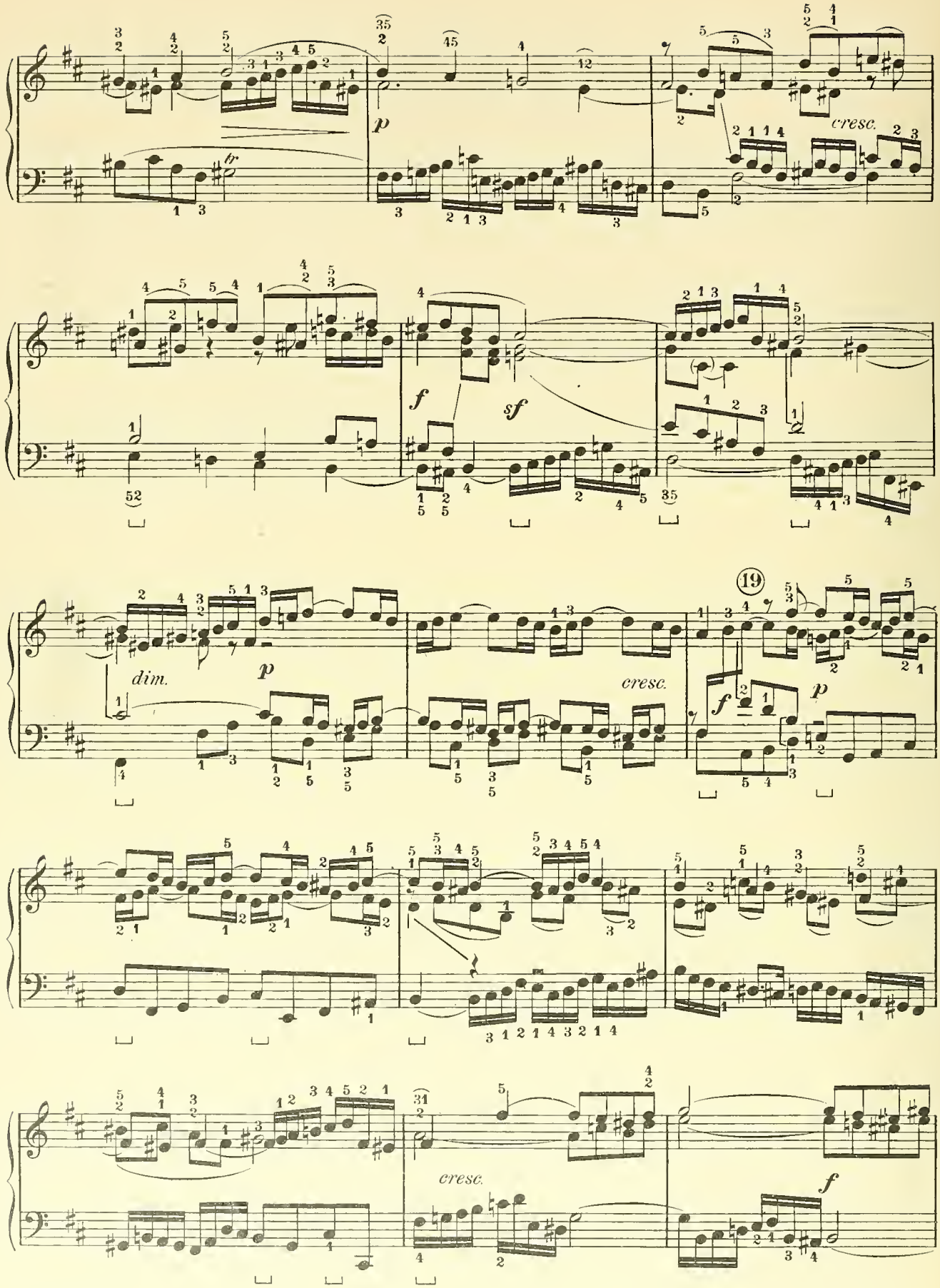

p
cresc.
dim.
p
cresc.
cresc.
dim.
cresc.
f
37
più f
ff
dim.

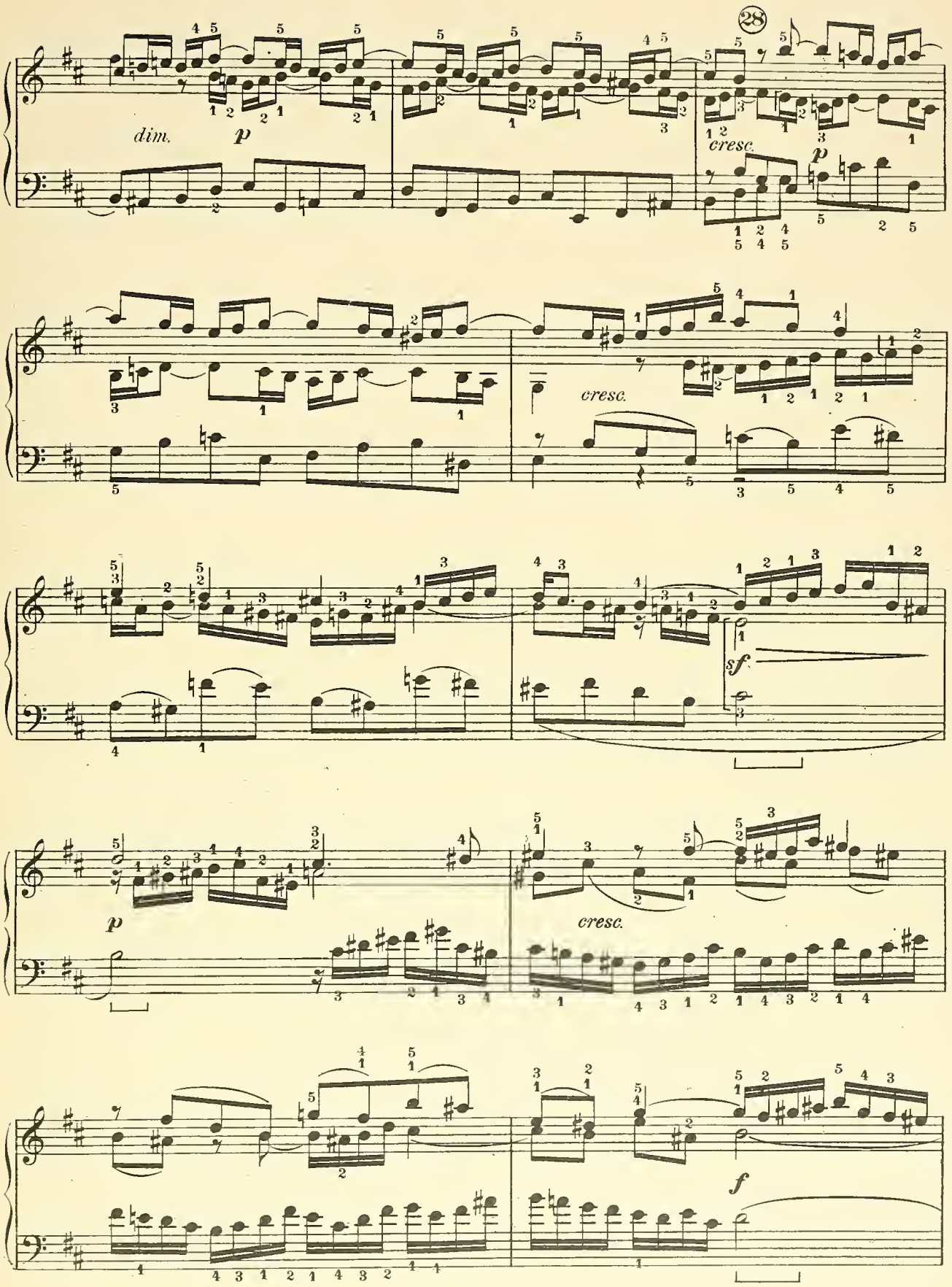


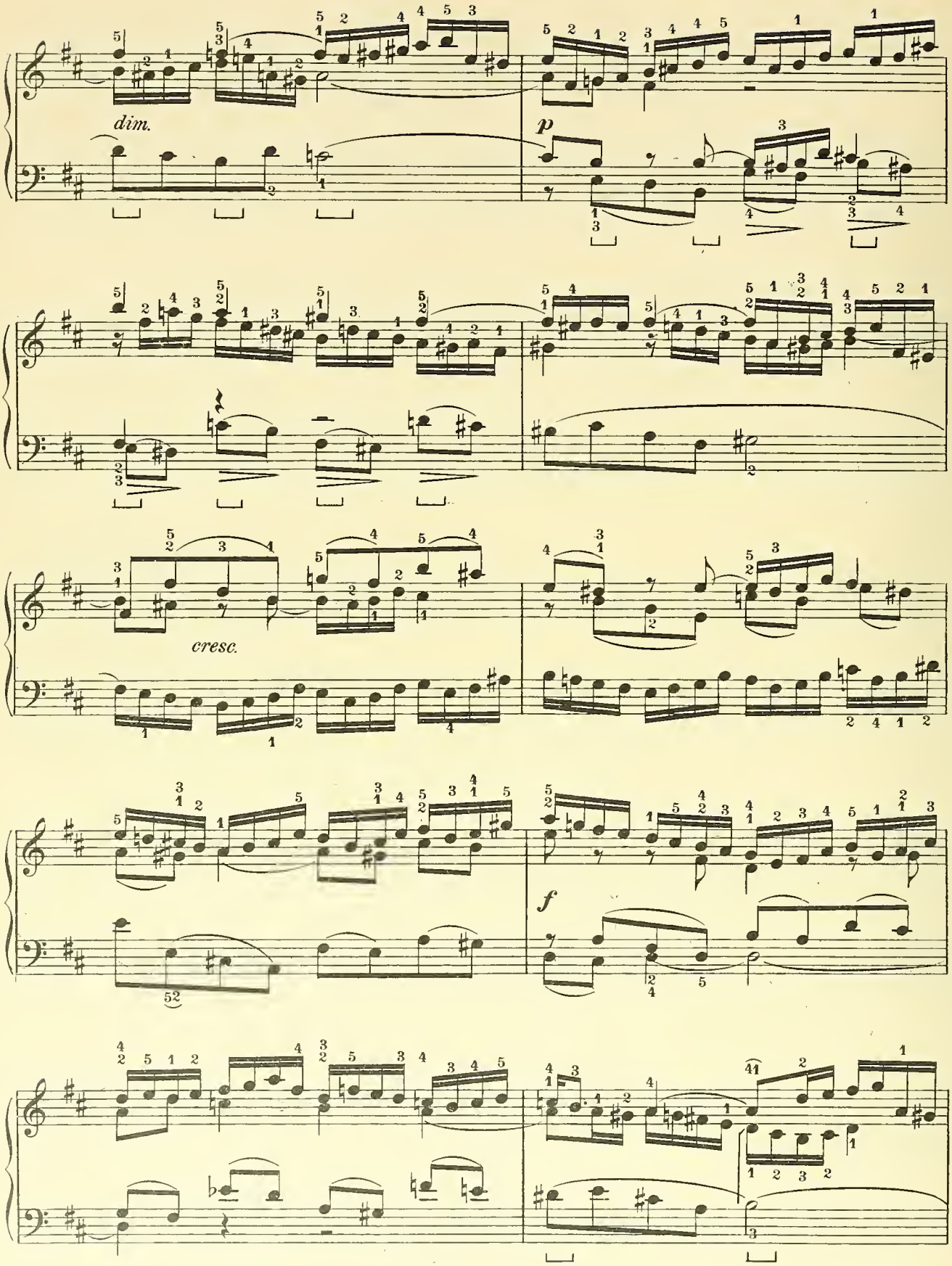
FUGUE (in 4 voices)

Largo (♪ = 92)




p
cresc.
f
sf
dim.
p
cresc.
19
f
p
cresc.
f


28
dim.
p
cresc.
p
cresc.
sf
p
cresc.
f


dim.
p
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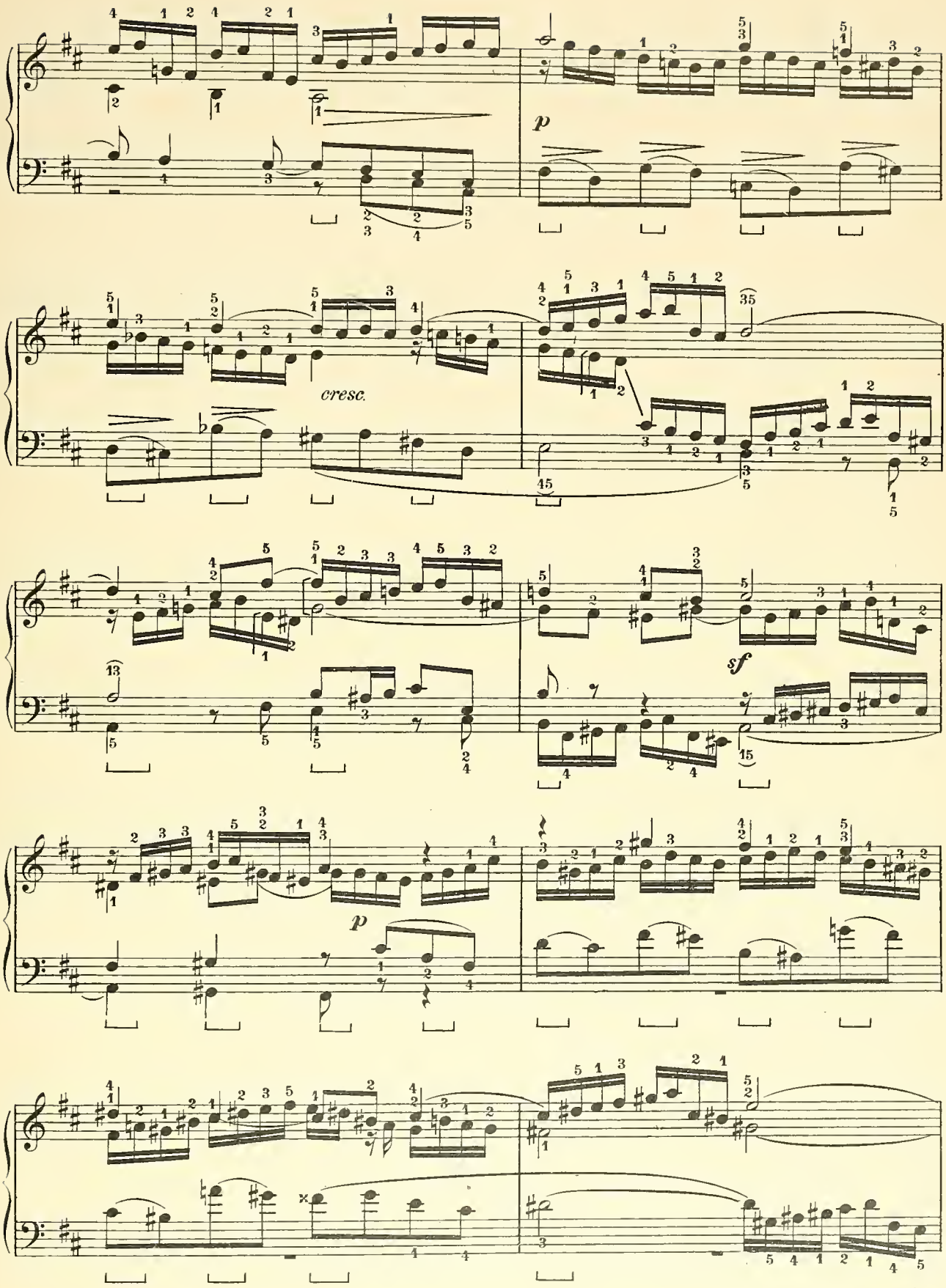
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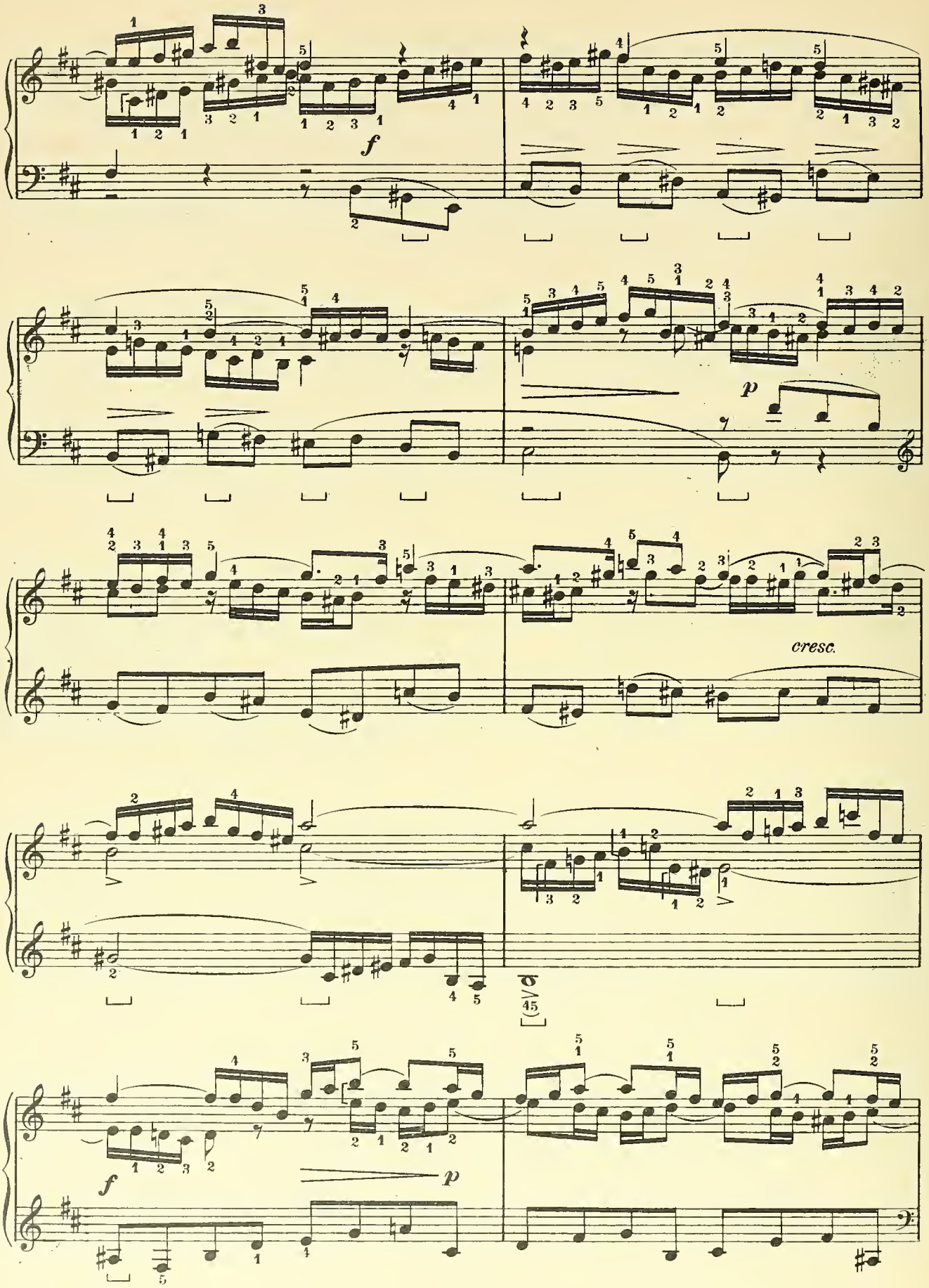
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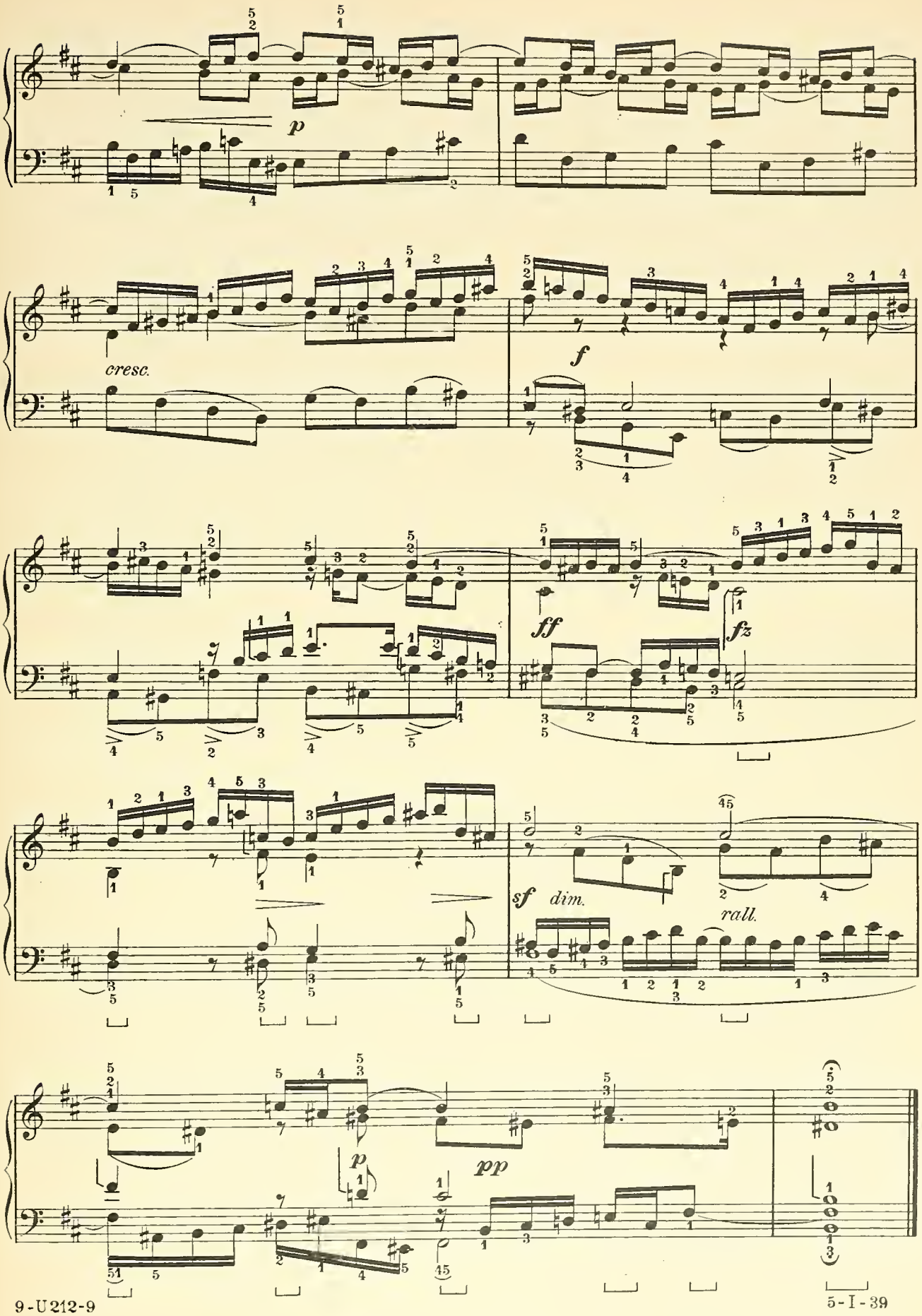
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MEMORANDA

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Theodore Thomas

Anton Seidl

TWO DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN CONDUCTORS

CHAPTER EXAMINATION

1. Give the dates of Bach's birth and death.

2. Define: polyphony; monophony; counter-theme.

3. What was the object of the Well-Tempered Clavichord?

4. How many Preludes and Fugues in the Well-Tempered Calvichord? By what tonal system do these succeed each other?

5. Define Equal Temperament. What is the Tierce de Picardie?

6. Write a concise analysis of one of the Preludes and one of the Fugues given in this chapter.

7. What are the chief technical benefits to be derived from the study of Bach's works?

8. Why has the *C minor* Fugue no *stretto?*

9. Which Prelude and Fugue have a definite thematic relationship?

10. Name some composers who derived much of their inspiration from Bach.

Student Percentage

Examined by Date

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC NEW YORK